





276.

THE
BIGLOW PAPERS.

BY
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

SECOND SERIES.

PART I. CONTAINING

1. BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN, ESQ. TO MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.
2. MASON AND SLIDELL: A YANKEE IDYLL.

Authorized Edition.

LONDON:
TRÜBNER & CO. 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1862.

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By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

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BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN, ESQ. TO MR. HOSEA
BIGLOW.

*Letter from the REVEREND HOMER WILBUR, M.A. inclosing
the Epistle aforesaid.*

Jaalam, 15th Nov., 1861.

* * * * *

It is not from any idle wish to obtrude my humble person with undue prominence upon the publick view that I resume my pen upon the present occasion. *Juniores ad labores.* But having been a main instrument in rescuing the talent of my young parishioner from being buried in the ground, by giving it such warrant with the world as would be derived from a name already widely known by several printed discourses (all of which I may be permitted without immodesty to state have been deemed worthy of preservation in the Library of Harvard College by my esteemed friend Mr. Sibley), it seemed becoming that I should not only testify to the genuineness of the following production, but call attention to it, the more as Mr. Biglow had so long been silent as to be in danger of absolute oblivion. I insinuate no claim to any share in the authorship (*vix ea nostra voco*) of the works already published by Mr. Biglow, but merely take to myself the credit of having fulfilled toward them the office of taster (*experto crede*), who, having first

tried, could afterward bear witness—an office always arduous, and sometimes even dangerous, as in the case of those devoted persons who venture their lives in the deglutition of patent medicines (*dolus latet in generalibus*, there is deceit in the most of them) and thereafter are wonderfully preserved long enough to append their signatures to testimonials in the diurnal and hebdomadal prints. I say not this as covertly glancing at the authors of certain manuscripts which have been submitted to my literary judgment (though an epick in twenty-four books on the "Taking of Jericho" might, save for the prudent forethought of Mrs. Wilbur in secreting the same just as I had arrived beneath the walls and was beginning a catalogue of the various horns and their blowers, too ambitiously emulous in longanimity of Homer's list of ships, might, I say, have rendered frustrate any hope I could entertain *vacare Musis* for the small remainder of my days), but only further to secure myself against any imputation of unseemly forthputting. I will barely subjoin, in this connexion, that, whereas Job was left to desire, in the soreness of his heart, that his adversary had written a book, as perchance misanthropically wishing to indite a review thereof, yet was not Satan allowed so far to tempt him as to send Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar each with an unprinted work in his wallet to be submitted to his censure. But of this enough. Were I in need of other excuse, I might add that I write by the express desire of Mr. Biglow himself, whose entire winter leisure is occupied, as he assures me, in answering demands for autographs, a labour exacting enough in itself, and egregiously so to him, who, being no ready penman, cannot sign so much as his name without strange contortions of the face (his nose, even, being essential to complete success) and painfully suppressed Saint-Vitus-dance of every muscle in his body. This, with his having been put in the Commission of the Peace by our excellent Governor (*O, si*

sic omnes!) immediately on his accession to office, keeps him continually employed. *Haud inexpertus loquor*, having for many years written myself J. P., and being not seldom applied to for specimens of my chirography, a request to which I have sometimes too weakly assented, believing as I do that nothing written of set purpose can properly be called an autograph, but only those unpremeditated sallies and lively runnings which betray the fireside Man instead of the hunted Notoriety doubling on his pursuers. But it is time that I should bethink me of Saint Austin's prayer, *Libera me a meipso*, if I would arrive at the matter in hand.

Moreover, I had yet another reason for taking up the pen myself. I am informed that the *Atlantic Monthly* is mainly indebted for its success to the contributions and editorial supervision of Dr. Holmes, whose excellent "Annals of America" occupy an honoured place upon my shelves. The journal itself I have never seen; but if this be so, it should seem that the recommendation of a brother-clergyman (though *par magis quam similis*) would carry a greater weight. I suppose that you have a department for historical lucubrations, and should be glad, if deemed desirable, to forward for publication my "Collections for the Antiquities of Jaalam," and my (now happily complete) pedigree of the Wilbur family from its *fons et origo*, the Wild Boar of Ardennes. Withdrawn from the active duties of my profession by the settlement of a colleague-pastor, the Reverend Jeduthun Hitchcock, formerly of Brutus Four-Corners, I might find time for further contributions to general literature on similar topics. I have made large advances towards a completer genealogy of Mrs. Wilbur's family, the Pilcoxes, not, if I know myself, from any idle vanity, but with the sole desire of rendering myself useful in my day and generation. *Nulla dies sine linea*. I inclose a meteorological register, a list of the births, deaths, and marriages, and

a few *memorabilia* of longevity in Jaalam East Parish for the last half-century. Though spared to the unusual period of more than eighty years, I find no diminution of my faculties or abatement of my natural vigour, except a scarcely sensible decay of memory and a necessity of recurring to younger eyesight for the finer print in Cruden. It would gratify me to make some further provision for declining years from the emoluments of my literary labours—I had intended to effect an insurance on my life, but was deterred therefrom by a circular from one of the offices, in which the sudden deaths of so large a proportion of the insured was set forth as an inducement, that it seemed to me little less than the tempting of Providence. *Neque in summâ inopiâ levis esse senectus potest, ne sapienti quidem.*

Thus far concerning Mr. Biglow ; and so much seemed needful (*brevis esse laboro*) by way of preliminary, after a silence of fourteen years. He greatly fears lest he may in this essay have fallen below himself, well knowing that, if exercise be dangerous on a full stomach, no less so is writing on a full reputation. Beset as he has been on all sides, he could not refrain, and would only imprecate patience till he shall again have "got the hang" (as he calls it) of an accomplishment long disused. The letter of Mr. Sawin was received some time in last June, and others have followed which will in due season be submitted to the publick. How largely his statements are to be depended on, I more than merely dubitate. He was always distinguished for a tendency to exaggeration—it might almost be qualified by a stronger term. *Fortiter mentire, aliquid hæret*, seemed to be his favourite rule of rhetoric. That he is actually where he says he is the post-mark would seem to confirm ; that he was received with the publick demonstrations he describes would appear consonant with what we know of the habits of those

regions; but further than this I venture not to decide. I have sometimes suspected a vein of humour in him which leads him to speak by contraries; but since, in the unrestrained intercourse of private life, I have never observed in him any striking powers of invention, I am the more willing to put a certain qualified faith in the incidents and the details of life and manners which give to his narratives some of the interest and entertainment which characterizes a Century Sermon.

It may be expected of me that I should say something to justify myself with the world for a seeming inconsistency with my well-known principles in allowing my youngest son to raise a company for the war, a fact known to all through the medium of the publick prints. I did reason with the young man, but *expellas naturam furcā, tamenusque recurrit*. Having myself been a chaplain in 1812, I could the less wonder that a man of war had sprung from my loins. It was, indeed, grievous to send my Benjamin, the child of my old age; but after the discomfiture of Manassas, I with my own hands did buckle on his armour, trusting in the great Comforter for strength according to my need. For truly the memory of a brave son dead in his shroud were a greater staff of my declining years than a coward, though his days might be long in the land, and he should get much goods. It is not till our earthen vessels are broken that we find and truly possess the treasure that was laid up in them. *Migravi in animam meam*. I have sought refuge in my own soul; nor would I be shamed by the heathen comedian with his *Nequam illud verbum, bene vult, nisi bene facit*. During our dark days, I read constantly in the inspired book of Job, which I believe to contain more food to maintain the fibre of the soul for right living and high-thinking than all pagan literature together, though I would by no means vilipend the study of the classicks. There I read

that Job said in his despair, even as the fool saith in his heart there is no God—"The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure." (*Job* xii. 6.) But I sought farther till I found this Scripture also, which I would have those perpend who have striven to turn our Israel aside to the worship of strange gods:—"If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant when they contended with me, what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?" (*Job* xxxi. 13-14.) On this text I preached a discourse on the last day of Fasting and Humiliation with general acceptance, though there were not wanting one or two Laodiceans who said that I should have waited till the President announced his policy. But let us hope and pray, remembering this of Saint Gregory, *Vult Deus rogari, vult cogi, vult quādam importunitate vinci.*

We had our first fall of snow on Friday last. Frosts have been unusually backward this fall. A singular circumstance occurred in this town on the 20th October, in the family of Deacon Pelatiah Tinkham. On the previous evening, a few moments before family-prayers,

* * * * *

[The editors of the *Atlantic* find it necessary here to cut short the letter of their valued correspondent, which seemed calculated rather on the rates of longevity in Jaalam than for less favoured localities. They have every encouragement to hope that he will write again.]

With esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR, A.M.

It 's some consid'ble of a spell sence I hain't writ no
letters,

An' ther' 's gret changes hez took place in all polit'cle
metters :

Some canderdates air dead an' gone, an' some hez ben
defeated,

Which 'mounts to pooty much the same ; fer it 's ben
proved repeated

A betch o' bread thet hain't riz once ain't goin' to rise
agin,

An' it 's jest money throwed away to put the emptins in :
But thet 's wut folks wun't never larn ; they dunno
how to go,

Arter you want their room, no more 'n a bullet-headed
beau ;

Ther' 's ollers chaps a-hangin' roun' thet can't see pea-
time 's past,

Mis'ble as roosters in a rain, heads down an' tails half-
mast :

It ain't disgraceful bein' beat, when a holl nation doos it,
But Chance is like an amberill,—it don't take twice to
lose it.

I spose 'you 're kin' o' cur'ous, now, to know why I
hain't writ.

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I spose 'you 're kin' o' cur'ous, now, to know why I
hain't writ.

Wal, I've ben where a litt'ry taste don't somehow seem
to git

Th' encouragement a feller 'd think, thet 's used to
public schools,

An' where sech things ez paper 'n' ink air clean agin
the rules :

A kind o' vicyvarsy house, built dreffle strong an' stout,
So 's 't honest people can't git in, ner t' other sort git
out,

An' with the winders so contrived, you 'd prob'ly like
the view

Better a-lookin' in than out, though it seems sing'lar, tu ;
But then the landlord sets by ye, can't bear ye out o'
sight,

And locks ye up ez reg'lar ez an outside door at night.

This world is awfle contrary : the rope may stretch your
neck

Thet mebbly kep' another chap frum washin' off a wreck ;
An' you will see the taters grow in one poor feller's
patch,

So small no self-respectin' hen thet valled time 'ould
scratch,

So small the rot can't find 'em out, an' then agin, nex'
door,

Ez big ez wut hogs dream on when they 're 'most too
fat to snore.

But groutin' ain't no kin' o' use ; an' ef the fust throw
fails,
Why, up an' try agin, thet 's all,—the coppers ain't all
tails ;
Though I *hev* seen 'em when I thought they hed n't no
more head
Than 'd sarve a nussin' Brigadier thet gits some ink to
shed.

When I writ last, I 'd ben turned loose by thet blamed
nigger, Pomp,
Ferlornier than a musquash, ef you 'd took an' dreened
his swamp :
But I ain't o' the meechin' kind, thet sets an' thinks
fer weeks
The bottom 's out o' th' univarse coz their own gillpot
leaks.
I hed to cross bayous an' criks, (wal, it did beat all
natur',)
Upon a kin' o' corderoy, fust log, then alligator :
Luck'ly the critters warn't sharp-sot ; I guess 't wuz
overruled
They 'd done their mornin's marketin' an' gut their
hunger cooled ;
Fer missionaries to the Creeks an' runaways are viewed
By them an' folks ez sent express to be their reg'lar
food :

Wutever 't wuz, they laid an' snoozed ez peacefully ez
sinners,

Meek ez disgustin' deacons be at ordination dinners ;
Ef any on 'em turned an' snapped, I let 'em kin' o' taste
My live-oak leg, an' so, ye see, ther' warn't no gret o'
waste.

Fer they found out in quicker time than ef they 'd ben
to college

'T warn't heartier food than though 't wuz made out o'
the tree o' knowledge.

But *I* tell *you* my other leg hed larned wut pizon-nettle
meant,

An' var'ous other usefle things, afore I reached a settle-
ment,

An' all o' me thet wuz n't sore an' sendin' prickles
thru me

Wuz jest the leg I parted with in lickin' Montezumy :
A usefle limb it 's ben to me, an' more of a support
Than wut the other hez ben,—coz I dror my pension
for 't.

Wal, I gut in at last where folks wuz civerlized an'
white,

Ez I diskivered to my cost afore 't wuz hardly night ;
Fer 'z I wuz settin' in the bar a-takin' sunthin' hot,
An' feelin' like a man agin, all over in one spot,
A feller thet sot opposite, arter a squint at me,

Lep up an' drewed his peacemaker, an', "Dash it, Sir,"
suz he,
"I 'm doubledashed ef you ain't him thet stole my
yeller chettle,
(You 're all the stranger thet 's around,) so now
you 've gut to settle ;
It ain't no use to argerfy ner try to cut up frisky,
I know ye ez I know the smell o' ole chain-lightnin'
whiskey ;
We 're lor-abidin' folks down here, we 'll fix ye so 's
't a bar
Would n' tech ye with a ten-foot pole ; (Jedge, you
jest warm the tar ;)
You 'll think you 'd better ha' gut among a tribe o'
Mongrel Tartars,
'Fore we 've done showin' how we raise our Southun
prize tar-martyrs ;
A moultin' fallen cherubim, ef he should see ye, 'd
snicker,
Thinkin' he hed n't nary chance. Come, genlemun,
le' 's liquor ;
An', Gin'ral, when you 've mixed the drinks an'
'chalked 'em up, tote roun'
An' see ef ther' 's a feather-bed (thet 's borryable) in
town.
We 'll try ye fair, Ole Grafted-Leg, an' ef the tar wun't
stick,

Th' ain't not a juror here but wut 'll 'quit ye double-quick."

To cut it short, I wun't say sweet, they gi' me a good dip,

(They ain't *perfessin'* Bahptists here,) then give the bed a rip,—

The jury 'd sot, an' quicker 'n a flash they hetched me out, a livin'

Extemp'ry mammoth turkey-chick fer a Feejee Thanks-givin'.

Thet I felt some stuck up is wut it 's nat'ral to suppose,
When poppylar enthusiasm hed furnished me sech clo'es ;

(Ner 't ain't without edvantiges, this kin' o' suit, ye see,
It 's water-proof, an' water 's wut I like kep' out o' me ;)

But nut content with thet, they took a kerridge from the fence

An' rid me roun' to see the place, entirely free 'f expense,

With forty-'leven new kines o' sarse without no charge acquainted me,

Gi' me three cheers, an' vowed that I wuz all their fahncy painted me ;

They treated me to all their eggs ; (they keep 'em I should think,

Fer sech ovations, pooty long, for they wuz mos' distinct' ;)

They starred me thick 'z the Milky-Way with indiscrim'nit cherity,

Fer wut we call reception eggs air sunthin' of a rarity ;
Green ones is plentiful enough, skurce wuth a nigger's getherin',

But your dead-ripe ones ranges high fer treatin' Nothun bretherin :

A spottedder, ringstreakeder child the' warn't in Uncle Sam's

Holl farm,—a cross of stripèd pig an' one o' Jacob's lambs ;

'T wuz Dannil in the lions' den, new an' enlarged edition,

An' everythin' fust-rate o' 'ts kind, the' warn't no impersition.

People's impulsiver down here than wut our folks to home be,

An' kin' o' go it 'ith a resh in raisin' Hail Columby :

Thet's so : an' they swarmed out like bees, for your real Southun men's

Time is n't o' much more account than an ole settin' hen's ;

(They jest work semioccashnally, or else don't work at all,

An' so their time an' 'tention both air et saci'ty's call.)

Talk about hospitality ! wut Nothun town d' ye know
Would take a totle stranger up an' treat him gratis so ?
You 'd better b'lieve ther' 's nothin' like this spendin',
days an' nights

Along 'ith a dependent race fer civerlizin' whites.

But this wuz all prelim'nary ; it's so Gran' Jurors here
Fin' a true bill, a hendier way than ourn, an' nut so
dear ;

So arter this they sentenced me, to make all tight 'n'
snug,

Afore a reg'lar court o' law, to ten years in the Jug.

I did n' make no gret defence : you don't feel much
like speakin',

When, ef you let your clamshells gape, a quart o' tar
will leak in :

I *hev* hearn tell o' winged words, but pint o' fact it tethers
The spoutin' gift to hev your words tu thick sot on
with feathers,

An' Choate ner Webster would n't ha' made an A 1
kin' o' speech

Astride a Southun chestnut horse sharper 'n a baby's
screech.

Two year ago they ketched the thief, 'n' seein' I wuz
innercent,

They jest uncorked an' le' me run, an' in my stid the
sinner sent

To see how *he* liked pork 'n' pone flavored with wa'nut
saplin',
An' nary social priv'ledge but a one-hoss, starn-wheel
chaplin.
When I come out, the folks behaved mos' gen'manly
an' harnsome ;
They 'lowed it would n't be more 'n right, ef I should
cuss 'n' darn some :
The Cunnle he apolergized ; suz he, "I 'll du wut 's
right,
I 'll give ye settisfeccion now by shootin' ye at sight,
An' give the nigger, (when he 's caught,) to pay him
fer his trickin'
In gittin' the wrong man took up, a most H fired
lickin',—
It 's jest the way with all on 'em, the inconsistent
critters,
They 're 'most enough to make a man blaspheme his
mornin' bitters ;
I 'll be your frien' thru thick an' thin an' in all kines
o' weathers,
An' all you 'll hev to pay fer 's jest the waste o' tar an'
feathers :
A lady owned the bed, ye see, a widder, tu, Miss
Shennon ;
It wuz her mite ; we would ha' took another, ef
ther 'd ben one :

B

We don't make *no* charge for the ride an' all the other
fixins.

Le' 's liquor ; Gin'ral, you can chalk our friend for all
the mixins."

A meetin' then wuz called, where they "RESOLVED,
Thet we respec'

B. S. Esquire for quallerties o' heart an' intellee'
Peculiar to Columby's sile, an' not to no one else's,
Thet makes Európean tyrans scringe in all their gilded
pel'ces,

An' doos gret honor to our race an' Southun institoo-
tions":

(I give ye jest the substance o' the leadin' resoolootions :)
"RESOLVED, Thet we revere in him a soger 'thout a flor,
A martyr to the princerples o' libbaty an' lor :
RESOLVED, Thet other nations all, ef sot 'longside o' us,
For vartoo, larnin', chivverlry, ain't noways wuth a
cuss."

They gut up a subscription, tu, but no gret come o' *that* ;
I 'xpect in cairin' of it roun' they took a leaky hat ;
Though Southun genelmun ain't slow at puttin' down
their name,

(When they can write,) fer in the eend it comes to jest
the same,

Because, ye see, 't's the fashion here to sign an' not to
think

A critter 'd be so sordid ez to ax 'em for the chink :

I did n't call but jest on one, an' *he* drawed toothpick
on me,
An' reckoned he warn't goin' to stan' no sech dog-
gauned econ'my;
So nothin' more wuz realized, 'ceptin' the good-will
shown,
Than ef 't had ben from fust to last a reg'lar Cotton
Loan.
It 's a good way, though, come to think, coz ye enjy
the sense
O' lendin' lib'rally to the Lord, an' nary red o' 'xpense :
Sence then I've gut my name up for a gin'rous-hearted
man
By jes' subscribin' right an' left on this high-minded
plan ;
I've gin away my thousans so to every Southun sort
O' missions, colleges, an' sech, ner ain't no poorer for 't.

I warn't so bad off, arter all; I need n't hardly mention
That Guv'ment owed me quite a pile for my arrears o'
pension,—
I mean the poor, weak thing we *hed*: we run a new
one now,
Thet strings a feller with a claim up tu the nighest
bough,
An' *prectises* the rights o' man, purtects down-trodden
debtors,

Ner wun't hev creditors about a-scrougin' o' their betters:
Jeff's gut the last idees ther' is, poscrip', fourteenth
edition,

He knows it takes some enterprise to run an oppersition ;
Ourn's the fust thru-by-daylight train, with all ou'doors
for deepot,

Yourn goes so slow you 'd think 't wuz drawed by a last
cent'ry teapot ;—

Wal, I gut all on 't paid in gold afore our State seceded,
An' done wal, for Confed'rit bonds warn't jest the cheese
I needed :

Nut but wut they 're ez *good* ez gold, but then it 's
hard a-breakin' on 'em,

An' ignorant folks is ollers sot an' wun't git used to
takin' on 'em ;

They 're wuth ez much ez wut they wuz afore ole
Mem'nger signed 'em.

An' go off middlin' wal for drinks, when ther' 's a knife
behind 'em ;

We *du* miss silver, jest fer thet an' ridin' in a bus,
Now we've shook off the despots thet wuz suckin' at
our pus ;

An' it's *because* the South's so rich ; 't wuz nat'ral to expec'
Supplies o' change wuz jest the things we should n't
recollec' ;

We 'd ough' to ha' thought aforehan', though, o' thet
good rule o' Crockett's,

For 't's tiresome cairin' cotton-bales an' niggers in your
pockets,

Ner 't ain't quite hendy to pass off one o' your six-foot
Guineas

An' git your halves an' quarters back in gals an' pick-
aninnies :

Wal, 't ain't quite all a feller 'd ax, but then ther' 's
this to say,

It 's on'y jest among ourselves that we expec' to pay ;
Our system would ha' caird us thru in any Bible cent'ry,
'Fore this onscripterl plan come up o' books by double
entry ;

We go the patriarkle here out o' all sight an' hearin',
For Jacob warn't a circumstance to Jeff at financierin' ;
He never 'd thought o' borryin' from Esau like all nater
An' then cornfiscatin' all debts to sech a small pertater ;
There 's p'litickle econ'my, now, combined 'ith morril
beauty

Thet saycrifices privit eends (your in'my's, tu) to dooty !
Wy, Jeff 'd ha' gin him five an' won his eye-teeth 'fore
he knowed it,

An', stid o' wastin' pottage, he 'd ha' eat it up an'
owed it.

But I wuz goin' on to say how I come here to dwell ;—
'Nough said, thet, arter lookin' roun', I liked the place
so wal,

Where niggers doos a double good, with us atop to
stiddy 'em,
By bein' proofs o' prophecy an' cirkleatin' medium, .
Where a man 's sunthin' coz he 's white, an' whiskey 's
cheap ez fleas,
An' the financial pollercy jest sooted my idees,
Thet I friz down right where I wuz, merried the Widder
Shennon,
(Her thirds wuz part in cotton-land, part in the curse
o' Canaan,)
An' here I be ez lively ez a chipmunk on a wall,
With nothin' to feel riled about much later 'n Eddam's
fall.

Ez fur ez human foresight goes, we made an even trade:
She gut an overseer, an' I a fem'ly ready-made,
(The youngest on 'em 's 'most growed up,) rugged an'
spry ez weazles,
So 's 't ther' 's no resk o' doctors' bills fer hoopin'-cough
an' measles.
Our farm 's at Turkey-Buzzard Roost, Little Big Boosy
River,
Wal located in all respex,—fer't ain't the chills'n' fever
Thet makes my writin' seem to squirm; a Southuner
'd allow I'd
Some call to shake, for I've jest hed to meller a new
cowhide.

Miss S. is all 'f a lady; th' ain't no better on Big Boosy,
Ner one with more accomplishmunts 'twixt here an'

Tuscaloosy;

She's an F. F., the tallest kind, an' prouder'n the Gran'
Turk,

An' never hed a relative thet done a stroke o' work;
Hern ain't a scrimpin' fem'ly sech ez *you* git up Down
East,

Th' ain't a growed member on 't but owes his thousuns
et the least:

She is some old; but then, agin ther' 's drawbacks in
my sheer:

Wut 's left o' me ain't more 'n enough to make a
Brigadier:

The wust is, she hez tantrums; she is like Seth Moody's
gun

(Him thet wuz nicknamed frum his limp Ole Dot an'
Kerry One);

He 'd left her loaded up a spell, an' hed to git her clear,
So he onhitched,—Jeerusalem! the middle o' last year
Wuz right nex' door compared to where she kicked the
critter tu

(Though *jest* where he brought up wuz wut no human
never knew);

His brother Asaph picked her up an' tied her to a tree,
An' then she kicked an hour 'n' a half afore she 'd let
it be:

Wal, Miss S. *doos* hev cuttins-up an' pourins-out o'vials,
But then she hez her widder's thirds, an' all on us hez
 trials.

My objec', though, in writin' now warn't to allude to
 sech,

But to another suckemstance more dellykit to tech,—
I want thet you should grad'lly break my merriage to
 Jerushy,

An' there' 's a heap of argymunts thet 's emple to in-
 dooce ye :

Fust place, State's Prison,—wal, it's true it warn't fer
 crime, o' course,

But then it 's jest the same fer her in gittin' a disvorce ;
Nex' place, my State's secedin' out hez leg'lly lef' me
 free

To merry any one I please, pervidin' it's a she ;

Fin'lly, I never wun't come back, she need n't hev no
 fear on 't,

But then it 's wal to fix things right fer fear Miss S.
 should hear on 't ;

Lastly, I've gut religion South, an' Rushy she 's a pagan
Thet sets by' th' graven imiges o' the gret Nothun
 Dagon ;

(Now I hain't seen one in six munts, for, sence our
 Treashry Loan,

Though yaller boys is thick enough, eagles hez kind o'
 flown ;))

An' ef J. wants a stronger pint than them thet I hev
stated,
Wy, she 's an aliun in'my now, an' I 've ben cornfis-
cated,—
For sence we 've entered on th' estate o' the late
nayshnul eagle,
She hain't no kin' o' right but jest wut I allow ez
legle :
Wut *doos* Secedin' mean, ef 't ain't thet nat'rul rights
hez riz, 'n'
Thet wut is mine 's my own, but wut's another man's
ain't his'n ?

Besides, I could n't do no else ; Miss S. suz she to me,
"You 've sheered my bed," [Thet 's when I paid my
interduction fee
To Southun rites,] "an' kep' your sheer," [Wal, I allow
it sticked
So 's 't I wuz most six weeks in jail afore I gut me
picked,]
"Ner never paid no demmiges ; but thet wun't do no
harm,
Pervidin' thet you 'll undertake to oversee the farm ;
(My eldes' boy is so took up, wut with the Ringtail
Rangers
An' settin' in the Jestice-Court for welcomin' o'
strangers";)

[He sot on *me* ;] “ an’ so, ef you ’ll jest undertake the
care

Upon a mod’rit sellery, we ’ll up an’ call it square ;
But ef you *can’t* conclude,” suz she, an’ give a kin’ o’
grin,

“ Wy, the Gran’ Jury, I expect, ’ll hev to set agin.”

Thet ’s the way metters stood at fust ; now wut wuz I
to du,

But jest to make the best on’t an’ off coat an’ buckle tu ?
Ther’ ain’t a livin’ man thet finds an income neces-
sariar

Than me,—bimeby I’ll tell ye how I fin’lly come to
merry her.

She hed another motive, tu : I mention of it here

T’ encourage lads thet’s growin’ up to study ’n’ per-
severe,

An’ show ’em how much better ’t pays to mind their
winter-schoolin’

Than to go off on benders ’n’ sech, an’ waste their time
in foolin’ ;

Ef ’t warn’t for studyin’ evenins, I never ’d ha’ been
here

An orn’ment o’ saciety, in my approprut spear :

She wanted somebody, ye see, o’ taste an’ cultivation,
To talk along o’ preachers when they stopt to the planta-
tion ;

For folks in Dixie th't read an' write, onless it is by
jarks
Is skurce ez wut they wuz among th' oridgenal patri-
archs ;
To fit a feller f' wut they call the soshle higherarchy,
All thet you 've gut to know is jest beyund an evrage
darky ;
Schoolin' 's wut they can't seem to stan', they 're tu
consarned high-pressure,
An' knowin' t' much might spile a boy for bein' a
Secesher.
We hain't no settled preachin' here, ner ministeril
taxes ;
The min'ster's only settlement 's the carpet-bag he packs
his
Razor an' soap-brush intu, with his hymbook an' his
Bible,—
But they *du* preach, I swan to man, it 's puf'kly inde-
scrib'le !
They go it like an Ericsson's ten-hoss-power coleric
ingine,
An' make Ole Split-Foot winch an' squirm, for all he 's
used to singein' ;
Hawkins's whetstone ain't a pinch o' primin' to the
innards
To hearin' on 'em put free grace t' a lot o' tough old
sin-hards !

But I must eend this letter now : 'fore long I'll send a
fresh un :

I've lots o' things to write about, perticklerly Seceshun :
I 'm called off now to mission-work, to let a leetle
law in

To Cynthia's hide : an' so, till death,

Yours,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

MASON AND SLIDELL : A YANKEE IDYLL.

To the Editors of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Jaalam, 6th Jan., 1862.

GENTLEMEN—I was highly gratified by the insertion of a portion of my letter in the last number of your valuable and entertaining Miscellany, though in a type which rendered its substance inaccessible even to the beautiful new spectacles presented to me by a Committee of the Parish on New-Year's Day. I trust that I was able to bear your very considerable abridgment of my lucubrations with a spirit becoming a Christian. My third grand-daughter, Rebekah, aged fourteen years, and whom I have trained to read slowly and with proper emphasis (a practice too much neglected in our modern systems of education), read aloud to me the excellent essay upon "Old Age," the authour of which I cannot help suspecting to be a young man who has never yet known what it was to have snow (*canties morosa*) upon his own roof. *Dissolve frigus, large super foco ligna reponens*, is a rule for the young, whose wood-pile is yet abundant for such cheerful lenitives. A good life behind him is the best thing to keep an old man's shoulders from shivering at every breath of sorrow or ill-fortune. But methinks it were easier for an old man to feel the disadvantages of youth than the advantages of age. Of these latter I reckon one of the chiefest to be this; that we attach a less inordinate value to our own productions, and, distrusting daily more and more our own wisdom (with the conceit whereof at twenty we wrap ourselves away from knowledge as with a

garment), do reconcile ourselves with the wisdom of God. I could have wished, indeed, that room might have been made for the residue of the anecdote relating to Deacon Tinkham, which would not only have gratified a natural curiosity on the part of the publick (as I have reason to know from several letters of inquiry already received), but would also, as I think, have largely increased the circulation of your Magazine in this town. *Nihil humani alienum*, there is a curiosity about the affairs of our neighbours which is not only pardonable, but even commendable. But I shall abide a more fitting season.

As touching the following literary effort of Esquire Biglow, much might be profitably said on the topick of Idyllick and Pastoral Poetry, and concerning the proper distinctions to be made between them, from Theocritus, the inventor of the former, to Collins, the latest authour I know of who has emulated the classicks in the latter style. But in the time of civil war worthy a Milton to defend and a Lucan to sing, it may be reasonably doubted whether the publick, never too studious of serious instruction, might not consider other objects more deserving of present attention. Concerning the title of Idyll, which Mr. Biglow has adopted at my suggestion, it may not be improper to animadvert, that the name properly signifies a poem somewhat rustick in phrase (for, though the learned are not agreed as to the particular dialect employed by Theocritus, they are univrsanimous both as to its rusticity and its capacity of rising now and then to the level of more elevated sentiments and expressions), while it is also descriptive of real scenery and manners. Yet it must be admitted that the production now in question (which here and there bears perhaps too plainly the marks of my correcting hand) does partake of the nature of a Pastoral, inasmuch as the interlocutors therein are purely imaginary beings, and the whole is little better than *καπνοῦ σκιᾶς ὄντα*. The plot was,

as I believe, suggested by the "Twa Briggs" of Robert Burns, a Scottish poet of the last century, as that found its prototype in the "Mutual Complaint of Plainstones and Causey" by Fergusson, though the metre of this latter be different by a foot in each verse. I reminded my talented young parishioner and friend that Concord Bridge had long since yielded to the edacious tooth of Time. But he answered me to this effect: that there was no greater mistake of an authour than to suppose the reader had no fancy of his own; that, if once that faculty was to be called into activity, it were *better* to be in for the whole sheep than the shoulder; and that he knew Concord like a book—an expression questionable in propriety, since there are few things with which he is not more familiar than with the printed page. In proof of what he affirmed, he showed me some verses which with others he had stricken out as too much delaying the action, but which I communicate in this place because they rightly define "punkin-seed" (which Mr. Bartlett would have a kind of perch—a creature to which I have found a rod or pole not to be so easily equivalent in our inland waters as in the books of arithmetic), and because it conveys an eulogium on the worthy son of an excellent father, with whose acquaintance (*eheu, fugaces anni!*) I was formerly honoured.

"But nowadays the Bridge ain't wut they show,
So much ez Em'som, Hawthorne, an' Thoreau.
I know the village, though: was sent there once
A-schoolin', coz to home I played the dunce;
An' I've ben sence a-visitin' the Jedge,
Whose garding whispers with the river's edge,
Where I've sot mornin's lazy as the bream,
Whose only business is to head up-stream,
(We call 'm punkin-seed,) or else in chat
Along 'th the Jedge, who covers with his hat
More wit an' gumption an' shrewd Yankee sense
Than there is mosses on an ole stone fence."

Concerning the subject-matter of the verses, I have not the leisure at present to write so fully as I could wish, my time being occupied with the preparation of a discourse for the forthcoming bi-centenary celebration of the first settlement of Jaalam East Parish. It may gratify the publick interest to mention the circumstance, that my investigations to this end have enabled me to verify the fact (of much historick importance, and hitherto hotly debated) that Shearjashub Tarbox was the first child of white parentage born in this town, being named in his father's will under date August 7th, or 9th, 1662. It is well known that those who advocate the claims of Mehetable Goings, are unable to find any trace of her existence prior to October of that year. As respects the settlement of the Mason and Slidell question, Mr. Biglow has not incorrectly stated the popular sentiment, so far as I can judge by its expression in this locality. For myself, I feel more sorrow than resentment; for I am old enough to have heard those talk of England who still, even after the unhappy estrangement, could not unschool their lips from calling her the Mother-Country. But England has insisted on ripping up old wounds, and has undone the healing work of fifty years; for nations do not reason, they only feel, and the *spretæ injuria formæ* rankles in their minds as bitterly as in that of a woman. And because this is so, I feel the more satisfaction that our Government has acted (as all Governments should, standing as they do between the people and their passions) as if it had arrived at years of discretion. There are three short and simple words, the hardest of all to pronounce in any language (and I suspect they were no easier before the confusion of tongues), but which no man or nation that cannot utter can claim to have arrived at manhood. Those words are, *I was wrong*; and I am proud that, while England played the boy, our rulers had strength enough from below

and wisdom enough from above to quit themselves like men. Let us strengthen the hands of those in authority over us, and curb our own tongues,* remembering that General Wait commonly proves in the end more than a match for General Headlong, and that the Good Book ascribes safety to a multitude, indeed, but not to a mob, of counsellours. Let us remember and perpend the words of Paulus Emilius to the people of Rome: that, "if they judged they could manage the war to more advantage by any other, he would willingly yield up his charge; but if they confided in him, *they were not to make themselves his colleagues in his office, or raise reports, or criticize his actions, but, without talking, supply him with means and assistance necessary to the carrying on of the war; for, if they proposed to command their own commander, they would render this expedition more ridiculous than the former.*" (*Vide Plutarchum in vitâ P. E.*) Let us also not forget what the

* And not only our own tongues, but the pens of others, which are swift to convey useful intelligence to the enemy. This is no new inconvenience; for, under date, 3d June, 1745, General Pepperell wrote thus to Governor Shirley from Louisbourg:—"What your Excellency observes of the *army's being made acquainted with any plans proposed, until ready to be put in execution*, has always been disagreeable to me, and I have given many cautions relating to it. But when your Excellency considers that *our Council of War consists of more than twenty members*, I am persuaded you will think it *impossible for me to hinder it*, if any of them will persist in communicating to inferior officers and soldiers what ought to be kept secret. I am informed that the Boston newspapers are filled with paragraphs from private letters relating to the expedition. Will your Excellency permit me to say I think it may be of ill consequence? Would it not be convenient, if your Excellency should forbid the Printers' inserting such news?" Verily, if *tempora mutantur*, we may question the *et nos mutamur illis*; and if tongues be leaky, it will need all hands at the pumps to save the Ship of State. Our history dotes and repeats itself. If Sassyus (rather than Alcibiades) find a parallel in Beaugard, so Weakwash, as he is called by the brave Lieutenant Lion Gardiner, need not seek far among our own Sachems for his antitype.

same excellent authour says concerning Perseus's fear of spending money, and not permit the covetousness of Brother Jonathan to be the good-fortune of Jefferson Davis. For my own part, till I am ready to admit the Commander-in-Chief to my pulpit, I shall abstain from planning his battles. Patience is the armour of a nation; and in our desire for peace, let us never be willing to surrender the Constitution bequeathed us by fathers at least as wise as ourselves (even with Jefferson Davis to help us), and, with those degenerate Romans, *tuta et presentia quam vetera et periculosa malle*.

With respect,

Your ob^t humble serv^t,

HOMER WILBUR, A.M.

I LOVE to start out arter night 's begun,
An' all the chores about the farm are done,
The critters milked an' foddered, gates shet fast,
Tools cleaned aginst to-morrer, supper past,
An' Nancy darnin' by her ker'sene lamp,—
I love, I say, to start upon a' tramp,
To shake the kinkles out o' back an' legs,
An' kind o' rack my life off from the dregs
Thet 's apt to settle in the buttery-hutch
Of folks thet foller in one rut too much :
Hard work is good an' wholesome, past all doubt ;
Bnt 't ain't so, ef the mind gets tuckered out.

Now, bein' born in Middlesex, you know,
There's certin spots where I like best to go :
The Concord road, for instance, (I, for one,
Most gin'lly ollers call it *John Bull's Run*,)—
The field o' Lexin'ton, where England tried
The fastest colours thet she ever dyed,—
An' Concord Bridge, thet Davis, when he came,
Found was the bee-line track to heaven an' fame,—
Ez all roads be by natur', ef your soul
Don't sneak thru shun-pikes so 's to save the toll.

They're 'most too fur away, take too much time
To visit often, ef it ain't in rhyme ;
But there 's a walk thet's hendier, a sight,
An' suits me fust-rate of a winter's night,—
I mean the round whale's-back o' Prospect Hill.
I love to loiter there while night grows still,
An' in the twinklin' villages about,
Fust here, then there, the well-saved lights goes out,
An' nary sound but watch-dogs' false alarms,
Or muffled cock-crows from the drowsy farms,
Where some wise rooster (men act jest thet way)
Stands to 't thet moon-rise is the break o' day :
So Mister Seward sticks a three-months pin
Where the war 'd oughto end, then tries agin ;—
My gran'ther's rule was safer n' 't is to crow :
Don't never prophesy—unless ye know.

I love to muse there till it kind o' seems
Ez ef the world went eddyin' off in dreams.
The Northwest wind thet twitches at my baird
Blows out o' sturdier days not easy scared,
An' the same moon thet this December shines
Starts out the tents an' booths o' Putnam's lines ;
The rail-fence posts, acrost the hill thet runs,
Turn ghosts o' sogers should'rin' ghosts o' guns ;
Ez wheels the sentry, glints a flash o' light
Along the firelock won at Concord Fight,
An' 'twixt the silences, now fur, now nigh,
Rings the sharp challenge, hums the low reply.

Ez I was settin' so, it warn't long sence,
Mixin' the perfect with the present tense,
I heerd two voices som'ers in the air,
Though, ef I was to die, I can't tell where :
Voices I call 'em : 't was a kind o' sough
Like pine-trees thet the wind is geth'rin' through ;
An', fact, I thought it *was* the wind a spell,—
Then some misdoubted,—could n't fairly tell,—
Fust sure, then not, jest as you hold an eel,—
I knowed, an' did n't,—fin'lly seemed to feel
'T was Concord Bridge a-talkin' off to kill
With the Stone Spike thet 's druv thru Bunker Hill :
Whether 't was so, or ef I only dreamed,
I could n't say ; I tell it ez it seemed.

THE BRIDGE.

Wal, neighbor, tell us, wut 's turned up thet 's new ?
You 're younger 'n I be,—nigher Boston, tu :
An' down to Boston, ef you take their showin',
Wut they don't know ain't hardly wuth the knowin'.
There 's *sunthin'* goin' on, I know : las' night
The British sogers killed in our gret fight
(Nigh fifty year they hed n't stirred nor spoke)
Made sech a coil you 'd thought a dam hed broke :
Why, one he up an' beat a revellee
With his own crossbones on a holler tree,
Till all the graveyards swarmed out like a hive
With faces I hain't seen sence Seventy-five.
Wut is the news? 'T ain't good, or they 'd be cheerin'.
Speak slow an' clear, for I 'm some hard o' hearin'.

THE MONIMENT.

I don't know hardly ef it 's good or bad, ——

THE BRIDGE.

At wust, it can't be wus than wut we 've had.

THE MONIMENT.

You know them envys thet the Rebbles sent,
An' Cap'n Wilkes he borried o' the Trent ?

THE BRIDGE.

Wut ! hev they hanged 'em ? Then their wits is gone !
Thet 's a sure way to make a goose a swan !

THE MONIMENT.

No : England she *would* hev 'em, *Fee, Faw, Fum !*
(Ez though she hed n't fools enough to home,)
So they 've returned 'em ——

THE BRIDGE.

Hev they? Wal, by heaven,
Thet 's the wust news I 've heerd sence Seventy-seven !
By George, I meant to say, though I declare
It's 'most enough to make a deacon swear.

THE MONIMENT.

Now don't go off half-cock : folks never gains
By usin' pepper-sarse instid o' brains.
Come, neighbor, you don't understand ——

THE BRIDGE.

How? Hey?
Not understand? Why, wut 's to hender, pray?
Must I go huntin' round to find a chap
To tell me when my face hez had a slap?

THE MONIMENT.

See here : the British they found out a flaw
In Cap'n Wilkes's readin' o' the law :
(They *make* all laws, you know, an' so, o' course,
It's nateral they should understand their force :)
He 'd oughto took the vessel into port,
An' hed her sot on by a reg'lar court ;

She was a mail-ship, an' a steamer, tu,
An' thet, they say, hez changed the pint o' view,
Coz the old practice, bein' meant for sails,
Ef tried upon a steamer, kind o' fails ;
You *may* take out despatches, but you mus' n't
Take nary man ——

THE BRIDGE.

You mean to say, you dus' n't !
Changed pint o' view ! No, no,—it's overboard
With law an' gospel, when their ox is gored !
I tell ye, England's law, on sea an' land,
Hez ollers ben, "*I've gut the heaviest hand.*"
Take nary man ? Fine preachin' from *her* lips !
Why, she hez taken hundreds from our ships,
An' would agin, an' swear she had a right to,
Ef we warn't strong enough to be perlite to.
Of all the sarse thet I can call to mind,
England *doos* make the most onpleasant kind :
It's you're the sinner ollers, she's the saint ;
Wut's good's all English, all thet is n't ain't ;
Wut profits her is ollers right an' just,
An' ef you don't read Scriptur so, you must ;
She's praised herself ontill she fairly thinks
There ain't no light in Natur when she winks ;
Hain't she the Ten Comman'ments in her pus ?
Could the world stir 'thout she went, tu, ez nus ?

She ain't like other mortals, thet's a fact :
She never stopped the habus-corpus act,
 Nor specie payments, nor she never yet
 Cut down the int'rest on her public debt ;
She don't put down rebellions, lets 'em breed,
 An' 's ollers willin' Ireland should secede ;
 She 's all thet 's honest, honnable, an' fair,
 An' when the vartoos died they made her heir.

THE MONIMENT.

Wal, wal, two wrongs don't never make a right ;
 Ef we 're mistaken, own it, an' don't fight :
 For gracious' sake, hain't we enough to du
 'Thout gittin' up a fight with England, tu ?
 She thinks we 're rabble-rid——

THE BRIDGE.

An' so we can't
 Distinguish 'twixt *You ought n't* an' *You shan't* !
 She jedges by herself ; she 's no idear
 How 't stiddies folks to give 'em their fair sheer :
 The odds 'twixt her an' us is plain 's a steeple,—
 Her People 's turned to Mob, our Mob 's turned People.

THE MONIMENT.

She 's riled jes' now——

THE BRIDGE.

Plain proof her cause ain't strong,—
 The one thet fust gits mad 's most ollers wrong.

THE MONUMENT.

You're ollers quick to set your back aridge,—
Though 't suits a tom-cat more 'n a sober bridge :
Don't you git het : they thought the thing was planned ;
They 'll cool off when they come to understand.

THE BRIDGE.

Ef *thet*'s wut you expect, you 'll *hev* to wait :
Folks never understand the folks they hate :
She 'll fin' some other grievance jest ez good,
'Fore the month's out, to git misunderstood.
England cool off! She 'll do it, ef she sees
She's run her head into a swarm o' bees.
I ain't so prejudiced ez wut you spose :
I hev thought England was the best *thet* goes ;
Remember, (no, you can't,) when *I* was reared,
God save the King was all the tune you heerd :
But it's enough to turn Wachuset roun',
This stumpin' fellers when you think they're down.

THE MONUMENT.

But, neighbor, ef they prove their claim at law,
The best way is to settle, an' not jaw.
An' don't le' 's mutter 'bout the awfle bricks
We 'll give 'em, ef we ketch 'em in a fix :
That 'ere's most frequently the kin' o' talk
Of critters can't be kicked to toe the chalk ;

Your "You 'll see *nex*' time!" an' "Look out bimeby!"
Most ollers ends in eatin' umble-pie.
'T wun't pay to scringe to England : will it pay
To fear thet meaner bully, old "They 'll say" ?
Suppose they *du* say : words are dreffle bores,
But they ain't quite so bad ez seventy-fours.
Wut England wants is jest a wedge to fit
Where it 'll help to widen out our split :
She 's found her wedge, an' 't ain't for us to come
An' lend the beetle thet 's to drive it home.
For growed-up folks like us 't would be a scandale,
When we git sarsed, to fly right off the handle.
England ain't *all* bad, coz she thinks us blind :
Ef she can't change her skin, she can her mind ;
An' you will see her change it double-quick,
Soon ez we 've proved thet we 're a-goin' to lick.
She an' Columby 's gut to be fas' friends ;
For the world prospers by their privit ends :
'T would put the clock back all o' fifty years,
Ef they should fall together by the ears.

THE BRIDGE.

You may be right ; but hearken in your ear,—
I 'm older 'n you,—Peace wun't keep house with Fear :
Ef you want peace, the thing you 've gut to du
Is jest to show you 're up to fightin', tu.
I recollect how sailors' rights was won

Yard locked in yard, hot gun-lip kissin' gun :
Why, afore thet, John Bull sot up thet he
Hed gut a kind o' mortgage on the sea ;
You'd thought he held by Gran'ther Adam's will,
An' ef you knuckle down, *he*'ll think so still.
Better thet all our ships an' all their crews
Should sink to rot in ocean's dreamless ooze,
Each torn flag wavin' chellenge ez it went,
An' each dumb gun a brave man's monument,
Than seek sech peace ez only cowards crave :
Give *me* the peace of dead men or of brave !

THE MONIMENT.

I say, ole boy, it ain't the Glorious Fourth :
You'd oughto learned 'fore this wut talk wuz worth.
It ain't *our* nose thet gits put out o' jint ;
It's England thet gives up her dearest pint.
We've gut, I tell ye now, enough to du
In our own fem'ly fight, afore we're thru.
I hoped, las' spring, jest arter Sumter's shame,
When every flag-staff flapped its tethered flame,
An' all the people, startled from their doubt,
Come must'rin' to the flag with sech a shout,—
I hoped to see things settled 'fore this fall,
The Rebbles licked, Jeff Davis hanged, an' all ;
Then come Bull Run, an' *sence* then I've ben waitin'
Like boys in Jennoocary thaw for skatin',

Nothin' to du but watch my shadder's trace
Swing, like a ship at anchor, roun' my base,
With daylight's flood an' ebb : it's gittin' slow,
An' I 'most think we'd better let 'em go.
I tell ye wut, this war's a-goin' to cost ——

THE BRIDGE.

An' I tell *you* it wun't be money lost ;
Taxes milks dry, but, neighbor, you'll allow
Thet havin' things onsettled kills the cow :
We've gut to fix this thing for good an' all ;
It's no use buildin' wut's a-goin' to fall.
I'm older'n you, an' I've seen things an' men,
An' here's wut my experience hez ben :
Folks thet worked thorough was the ones thet thrive,
But bad work follers ye ez long's ye live ;
You can't git red on't ; jest ez sure ez sin,
It's ollers askin' to be done agin :
Ef we should part, it would n't be a week
'Fore your soft-soddered peace would spring aleak.
We've turned our cuffs up, but, to put her thru,
We must git mad an' off with jackets, tu ;
'T wun't du to think thet killin' ain't perlite,—
You've gut to be in airnest, ef you fight ;
Why, two-thirds o' the Rebbles 'ould cut dirt,
Ef they once thought thet Guv'ment meant to hurt ;
An' I *du* wish our Gin'als hed in mind

The folks in front more than the folks behind ;
You wun't do much ontill you think it's God,
An' not constitoounts, thet holds the rod ;
We want some more o' Gideon's sword, I jedge,
For proclamations hain't no gret of edge ;
There's nothin' for a cancer but the knife,
Unless you set by't more than by your life.
I've seen hard times ; I see a war begun
Thet folks thet love their bellies never'd won,—
Pharo's lean kine hung on for seven long year,—
But when't was done, we did n't count it dear.
Why, law an' order, honor, civil right,
Ef they *ain't* wuth it, wut *is* wuth a fight ?
I'm older'n you : the plough, the axe, the mill,
All kinds o' labor an' all kinds o' skill,
Would be a rabbit in a wile-cat's claw,
Ef 't warn't for thet slow critter, 'stablished law ;
Onsettle *thet*, an' all the world goes whiz,
A screw is loose in everythin' there is :
Good buttresses once settled, don't you fret
An' stir'em : take a bridge's word for thet !
Young folks are smart, but all ain't good thet's new ;
I guess the gran'thers they knowed sunthin', tu.

THE MONIMENT.

Amen to thet ! build sure in the beginnin',
An' then don't never tech the underpinnin' :

Th' older a Guv'ment is, the better 't suits ;
New ones hunt folks's corns out like new boots :
Change jest for change is like those big hotels
Where they shift plates, an' let ye live on smells.;

THE BRIDGE.

Wal, don't give up afore the ship goes down :
It's a stiff gale, but Providence wun't drown ;
An' God wun't leave us yet to sink or swim,
Ef we don't fail to du wut's right by Him.
This land o' ourn, I tell ye, 's gut to be
A better country than man ever see.
I feel my sperit swellin' with a cry
Thet seems to say, "Break forth an' prophesy !"
O strange New World, thet yet wast never young,
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,—
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
Was prowled round by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
An' who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,
Nussed by stern men with empires in their brains,
Who saw in vision their young Ishmel strain
With each hard hand a vassal ocean's mane,—
Thou, skilled by Freedom an' by gret events
To pitch new States ez Old-World men pitch tents,—
Thou, taught by Fate to know Jehovah's plan
Thet only manhood ever makes a man,
An' whose free latch-string never was drawed in

Against the poorest child o' Adam's kin,—
The grave's not dug where traitor hands shall lay
In fearful haste thy murdered corse away !

I see ——

Jest here some dogs began to bark,
So thet I lost old Concord's last remark :
I listened long, but all I seemed to hear
Was dead leaves goss'pin' on ^asome birch-trees near ;
But ez they hed n't no gret things to say,
An' said 'em often, I come right away,
An', walkin' home'ards, jest to pass the time,
I put some thoughts thet bothered me in rhyme :
I hain't hed time to fairly try 'em on,
But here they be,—it's

JONATHAN TO JOHN.

It don't seem hardly right, John,
When both my hands was full,
To stump me to a fight, John,—
Your cousin, tu, John Bull !
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
We know it now," sez he,
"The lion's paw is all the law,
Accordin' to J. B.,
Thet's fit for you an' me !"

Blood ain't so cool as ink, John :

It's likely you'd ha' wrote,
An' stopped a spell to think, John,

Arter they'd cut your throat ?

Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess
He'd skurce ha' stopped," sez he,
" To mind his p-s an' q-s, ef thet weasan'
Hed b'longed to ole J. B.,
Instid o' you an' me !"

Ef *I* turned mad dogs loose, John,

On *your* front-parlor stairs,
Would it jest meet your views, John,
To wait an' sue their heirs ?

Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess,
I on'y guess," sez he,
" Thet, ef Vattel on *his* toes fell,
'T would kind o' rile J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !"

Who made the law thet hurts, John,

Heads I win,—ditto, tails ?

" *J. B.*" was on his shirts, John,

Unless my memory fails.

Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess,
(I'm good at thet,)" sez he,

"Thet sauce for goose ain't *jest* the juice
For ganders with J. B.,
No more than you or me !"

When your rights was our wrongs, John,
You did n't stop for fuss,—
Britanny's trident-prongs, John,
Was good 'nough law for us.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
Though physio's good," sez he,
"It does n't foller that he can swaller
Prescriptions signed '*J. B.*,'
Put up by you an' me !"

We own the ocean, tu, John :
You mus' n't take it hard,
Ef we can't think with you, John,
It's *jest* your own back-yard.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
Ef *thet's* his claim," sez he,
"The fencin'-stuff 'll cost enough
To bust up friend J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !"

Why talk so dreffle big, John,
Of honor, when it meant
You did n't care a fig, John,
But *jest* for *ten per cent.* ?

Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
He's like the rest," sez he :
"When all is done, it's number one
Thet's nearest to J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !"

We give the critters back, John,
Cos Abram thought 't was right ;
It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,
Provokin' us to fight.

Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
We've a hard row," sez he,
"To hoe jest now ; but thet, somehow,
May heppen to J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !"

We ain't so weak an' poor, John,
With twenty million people,
An' close to every door, John,
A school-house an' a steeple.

Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
It is a fact," sez he,
"The surest plan to make a Man
Is, Think him so, J. B.,
Ez much ez you or me !"

Our folks believe in Law, John ;
An' it's for her sake, now,
They've left the axe an' saw, John,
The anvil an' the plough.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess,
Ef 't warn't for law," sez he,
" There'd be one shindy from here to Indy ;
An' thet don't suit J. B.
(When 't ain't 'twixt you an' me !)"

We know we've gut a cause, John,
Thet's honest, just, an' true ;
We thought 't would win applause, John,
Ef nowheres else, from you.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess
His love of right," sez he,
" Hangs by a rotten fibre o' cotton :
There's natur' in J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me !"

The South says, "*Poor folks down !*" John,
An' "*All men up !*" say we,—
White, yaller, black, an' brown, John :
Now which is your idee ?
Ole Uncle S. sez he, " I guess,
John preaches wal," sez he ;

“ But, sermon thru, an’ come to *du*,
Why, there ’s the old J. B.
A crowdin’ you an’ me ! ”

Shall it be love, or hate, John ?
It ’s you thet ’s to decide ;
Ain’t *your* bonds held by Fate, John,
Like all the world’s beside ?
Ole Uncle S. sez he, “ I guess
Wise men forgive,” sez he,
“ But not forget ; an’ some time yet
Thet truth may strike J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an’ me ! ”

God means to make this land, John,
Clear thru, from sea to sea,
Believe an’ understand, John,
The *wuth* o’ bein’ free.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, “ I guess,
God’s price is high,” sez he ;
“ But nothin’ else than wut He sells
Wears long, an’ thet J. B.
May learn like you an’ me ! ”

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BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN, ESQ., TO MR. HOSEA
BIGLOW.

With the following Letter from the REVEREND HOMER
WILBUR, A.M.

To the Editors of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Jaalam, 7th Feb., 1862.

RESPECTED FRIENDS,—If I know myself, and surely a man can hardly be supposed to have overpassed the limit of four-score years without attaining to some proficiency in that most useful branch of learning, (*e cælo descendit*, says the pagan poet,) I have no great smack of that weakness which would press upon the publick attention any matter pertaining to my private affairs. But since the following letter of Mr. Sawin contains not only a direct allusion to myself, but that in connection with a topick of interest to all those engaged in the publick ministrations of the sanctuary, I may be pardoned for touching briefly thereupon. Mr. Sawin was never a stated attendant upon my preaching—never, as I believe, even an occasional one, since the erection of the new house (where we now worship) in 1845. He did, indeed, for a time, supply a not unacceptable bass in the choir; but, whether on some umbrage (*omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus*) taken against the bass-viol, then, and till his decease in 1850, (*æt. 77.*) under the charge of Mr. Asaph Perley, or, as was reported by others, on account of an imminent subscription for a new bell, he thenceforth absented himself from all outward and visible communion. Yet he seems to have preserved, (*altâ mente*

repostum,) as it were, in the pickle of a mind soured by prejudice, a lasting *scunner*, as he would call it, against our staid and decent form of worship; for I would rather in that wise interpret his fling, than suppose that any chance tares sown by my pulpit discourses should survive so long, while good seed too often fails to root itself. I humbly trust that I have no personal feeling in the matter; though I know, that, if we sound any man deep enough, our lead shall bring up the mud of human nature at last. The Bretons believe in an evil spirit which they call *ar c'houskezik*, whose office it is to make the congregation drowsy; and though I have never had reason to think that he was specially busy among my flock, yet have I seen enough to make me sometimes regret the hinged seats of the ancient meeting-house, whose lively clatter, not unwillingly intensified by boys beyond eyeshot of the tithing-man, served at intervals as a wholesome *réveil*. It is true, I have numbered among my parishioners some whose gift of somnolence rivalled that of the Cretan Rip van Winkle, Epimenides, and who, nevertheless, complained not so much of the substance as of the length of my (by them unheard) discourses. Happy Saint Anthony of Padua, whose finny acolytes, however they might profit, could never murmur! *Quare fremuerunt gentes?* Who is he that can twice a week be inspired, or has eloquence (*ut ita dicam*) always on tap? A good man, and, next to David, a sacred poet, (himself, haply, not inexperienced of evil in this particular,) has said,—

“The worst speak something good : if all want sense,
God takes a text and preacheth patience.”

There are one or two other points in Mr. Sawin's letter which I would also briefly animadvert upon. And first concerning the claim he sets up to a certain superiority of blood and lineage in the people of our Southern States, now unhappily in rebellion against lawful authority and their own better

interests. There is a sort of opinions, anachronisms and anachorisms, foreign both to the age and the country, that maintain a feeble and buzzing existence, scarce to be called life, like winter flies, which in mild weather crawl out from obscure nooks and crannies to expatiate in the sun, and sometimes acquire vigour enough to disturb with their enforced familiarity the studious hours of the scholar. One of the most stupid and pertinacious of these is the theory that the Southern States were settled by a class of emigrants from the Old World socially superior to those who founded the institutions of New England. The Virginians especially lay claim to this generosity of lineage, which were of no possible account, were it not for the fact that such superstitions are sometimes not without their effect on the course of human affairs. The early adventurers to Massachusetts at least paid their passages; no felons were ever shipped thither; and though it be true that many deboshed younger brothers of what are called good families may have sought refuge in Virginia, it is equally certain that a great part of the early deportations thither were the sweepings of the London streets and the leavings of the London stews. On what the heralds call the spindle side, some, at least, of the oldest Virginian families are descended from matrons who were exported and sold for so many hogsheads of tobacco the head. So notorious was this, that it became one of the jokes of contemporary playwrights, not only that men bankrupt in purse and character were "food for the Plantations," (and this before the settlement of New England,) but also that any drab would suffice to wive such pitiful adventurers. "Never choose a wife as if you were going to Virginia," says Middleton in one of his comedies. The mule is apt to forget all but the equine side of his pedigree. How early the counterfeit nobility of the Old Dominion became a topick of ridicule in the Mother Country may be

learned from a play of Mrs. Behn's, founded on the Rebellion of Bacon : for even these kennels of literature may yield a fact or two to pay the raking. Mrs. Flirt, the keeper of a Virginia ordinary, calls herself the daughter of a baronet "undone in the late rebellion,"—her father having in truth been a tailor,—and three of the Council, assuming to themselves an equal splendour of origin, are shown to have been, one "a broken exciseman who came over a poor servant," another a tinker transported for theft, and the third "a common pick-pocket often flogged at the cart's tail." The ancestry of South Carolina will as little pass muster at the Herald's Visitation, though I hold them to have been more reputable, inasmuch as many of them were honest tradesmen and artisans, in some measure exiles for conscience' sake, who would have smiled at the high-flying nonsense of their descendants. Some of the more respectable were Jews. The absurdity of supposing a population of eight millions all sprung from gentle loins in the course of a century and a half is too manifest for confutation. The aristocracy of the South, such as it is, has the shallowest of all foundations, for it is only skin-deep,—the most odious of all, for, while affecting to despise trade, it traces its origin to a successful traffick in men, women, and children, and still draws its chief revenues thence. And though, as Doctor Chamberlayne says in his *Present State of England*, "to become a Merchant of Foreign Commerce, without serving any Apprentisage, hath been allowed no disparagement to a Gentleman born, especially to a younger Brother," yet I conceive that he would hardly have made a like exception in favour of the particular trade in question. Nor do I believe that such aristocracy as exists at the South (for I hold with Marius, *fortissimum quemque generosissimum*) will be found an element of anything like persistent strength in war,—thinking the saying of Lord Bacon (whom one quaintly called *inductionis*

dominus et Verulamii) as true as it is pithy, that "the more gentlemen, ever the lower books of subsidies." It is odd enough as an historical precedent, that, while the fathers of New England were laying deep in religion, education, and freedom the basis of a polity which has substantially outlasted any then existing, the first work of the founders of Virginia, as may be seen in Wingfield's *Memorial*, was conspiracy and rebellion,—odder yet, as showing the changes which are wrought by circumstance, that the first insurrection in South Carolina was against the aristocratical scheme of the Proprietary Government. I do not find that the cuticular aristocracy of the South has added anything to the refinements of civilization except the carrying of bowie-knives and the chewing of tobacco,—a high-toned Southern gentleman being commonly not only *quadrumanous*, but *quidruminant*.

I confess that the present letter of Mr. Sawin increases my doubts as to the sincerity of the convictions which he professes, and I am inclined to think that the triumph of the legitimate Government, sure sooner or later to take place, will find him and a large majority of his newly-adopted fellow-citizens (who hold with Dædalus, the primal sitter-on-the-fence, that *medium tenere tutissimum*) original Union men. The criticisms towards the close of his letter on certain of our failings are worthy to be seriously perpended; for he is not, as I think, without a spice of vulgar shrewdness. As to the good-nature in us which he seems to gird at, while I would not consecrate a chapel, as they have not scrupled to do in France, to *Nôtre Dame de la Haine* (Our Lady of Hate), yet I cannot forget that the corruption of good nature is the generation of laxity of principle. Good-nature is our national characteristic; and though it be, perhaps, nothing more than a culpable weakness or cowardice, when it leads us to put up tamely with manifold impositions and breaches of implied contracts,

(as too frequently in our publick conveyances,) it becomes a positive crime, when it leads us to look unresentfully on peculation, and to regard treason to the best Government that ever existed as something with which a gentleman may shake hands without soiling his fingers. I do not think the gallows-tree the most profitable member of our *Sylva*; but, since it continues to be planted, I would fain see a Northern limb ingrafted on it, that it may bear some other fruit than loyal Tennesseans.

A relick has recently been discovered on the east bank of Bushy Brook in North Jaalam, which I conceive to be an inscription in Runic characters relating to the early expedition of the Northmen to this continent. I shall make fuller investigations, and communicate the result in due season.

Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR, A.M.

P.S.—I inclose a year's subscription from Deacon Tinkham.

I HED it on my min' las' time, when I to write ye started,
To tech the leadin' featur's o' my gitin' me convarted ;
But, ez my letters hez to go clearn roun' by way o' Cuby,
'T wun't seem no staler now than then, by th' time it
gits where you be.

You know up North, though secs an' things air plenty
ez you please,
Ther' warn't nut one on 'em that come jes' square with
my idees :

I dessay they suit workin'-folks thet ain't noways
petic'lar,
But nut your Southun gen'leman thet keeps his per-
pendic'lar ;
I don't blame nary man thet casts his lot along o' *his*
folks,
But ef you cal'late to save *me*, 't must be with folks
thet *is* folks ;
Cov'nants o' works go 'ginst my grain, but down here
I 've found out
The true fus'-fem'ly A 1 plan,—here 's how it come
about.
When I fus' sot up with Miss S., sez she to me, sez she,—
“ Without you git religion, Sir, the thing can't never be ;
Nut but wut I respeck,” sez she, “ your intellectle part,
But you wun't noways du for me athout a change o'
heart :
Nothun religion works wal North, but it 's ez soft ez
spruce,
Compared to ourn, for keepin' sound,” sez she, “ upon
the goose ;
A day's experunce 'd prove to ye, ez easy 'z pull a
trigger,
It takes the Southun pint o' view to raise ten bales a
nigger ;
You 'll fin' thet human natur, South, ain't wholesome
more 'n skin-deep,

An' once 't a darkie 's took with it, he wun't be wuth
his keep."

"How *shell* I git it, Ma'am?" sez I. "Attend the
nex' camp-meetin'."

Sez she, "an' it 'll come to ye ez cheap ez onbleached
sheetin'."

Wal, so I went along an' hearn most an impressive
sarmon

About besprinklin' Afriky with fourth-proof dew o'
Harmon :

He did n' put no weaknin' in, but gin it tu us hot,
'Z ef he an' Satan 'd ben two bulls in one five-acre lot :
I don't purtend to foller him, but give ye jes' the
heads ;

For pulpit ellerkence, you know, 'most ollers kin' o'
spreads.

Ham's seed wuz gin to us in chairge, an' should n't we
be li'ble

In Kingdom Come, ef we kep' back their priv'lege in
the Bible ?

The cusses an' the promerses make one gret chain,
an' ef

You snake one link out here, one there, how much on 't
ud be lef' ?

All things wuz gin to man for 's use, his sarvice, an'
delight ;

An' don't the Greek an' Hebrew words thet mean a
Man mean White?

Ain't it belittlin' the Good Book in all its proudest
featur

To think 't wuz wrote for black an' brown an' 'lasses-
colored creaturs,

Thet could n' read it, ef they would, nor ain't by lor
allowed to,

But ough' to take wut we think suits their natur, an'
be proud to?

Warn't it more prof'table to bring your raw materil thru
Where you can work it inta grace an' inta cotton, tu,
Than sendin' missionaries out where fevers might defeat
'em,

An' ef the butcher did n' call, their p'rishioners might
eat 'em?

An' then, agin, wut airthly use? Nor 't warn't our
fault, in so fur

Ez Yankee skippers would keep on a-totin' on 'em over.
'T improved the whites by savin' 'em from ary need o'
wurkin',

An' kep' the blacks from bein' lost thru idleness an'
shirkin';

We took to 'em ez nat'ral ez a barn-owl doos to mice,
An' hed our hull time on our hands to keep us out o' vice';
'It made us feel ez pop'lar ez a hen doos with one
chicken,

An' fill our place in Natur's scale by givin' 'em a
lickin' :

For why should Cæsar git his dues more 'n Juno,
Pomp, an' Cuffy ?

It 's justifyin' Ham to spare a nigger when he 's stuffy.
Where 'd their soles go tu, like to know, ef we should
let 'em ketch

Freeknowledgism an' Fourierism an' Speritoolism an'
sech ?

When Satan sets himself to work to raise his very bes'
muss,

He scatters roun' onscriptur'l views relatin' to Ones'mus.

You 'd ough' to seen, though, how his facs an' argy-
munce an' figgers

Drawed tears o' real conviction from a lot o' pen'tent
niggers !

It warn't like Wilbur's meetin', where you 're shet up
in a pew,

Your dickeys sorrin' off your ears, an' bilin' to be thru ;
Ther' wuz a tent clost by thet hed a kag o' sunthin'
in it,

Where you could go, ef you wuz dry, an' damp ye in a
minute ;

An' ef you did dror off a spell, ther' wuz n't no occasion
To lose the thread, because, ye see, he bellered like all
Bashan.

It 's dry work follerin' argymunce, an' so, 'twix' this
an' thet,

I felt conviction weighin' down somehow inside my hat ;
It growed an' growed like Jonah's gourd, a kin' o'
whirlin' ketched me,

Ontil I fin'ly clean giv out an' owned up thet he 'd
fetched me ;

An' when nine-tenths the perrish took to tumblin'
roun' an' hollerin',

I did n' fin' no gret in th' way o' turnin' tu an' follerin'.
Soon ez Miss S. see thet, sez she, "*Thet* 's wut I call
wuth seein' !

Thet 's actin' like a reas'nable an' intellectle bein' ! "

An' so we fin'ly made it up, concluded to hitch hosses,
An' here I be 'n my ellermunt among creation's bosses ;
Arter I 'd drawed sech heaps o' blanks, Fortin at last
hez sent a prize,

An' chose me for a shinin' light o' missionary enterprise.

This leads me to another pint on which I 've changed
my plan.

O' thinkin' so 's 't I might become a straight-out Southun
man.

Miss S. (her maiden name wuz Higgs, o' the fus' fem'ly
here)

On her Ma's side 's all Juggernot, on Pa's all Cavileer,
An' sence I 've merried into her an' stept into her shoes,

It ain't more 'n nateral thet I should modderfy my
views :

I 've ben a-readin' in Debow ontill I 've fairly gut
So 'nlightened thet I 'd full ez lives ha' ben a Dook ez
nut ;

An' when we 've laid ye all out stiff, an' Jeff hez gut
his crown,

An' comes to pick his nobles out, *wun't* this child be in
town !

We 'll hev an Age o' Chivverlry surpassin' Mister
Burke's,

Where every fem'ly is fus'-best an' nary white man
works :

Our system 's sech, the thing 'll root ez easy ez a tater ;
For while your lords in furrin parts ain't nowadays marked
by natur',

Nor sot apart from ornery folks in featur's nor in figgers,
Ef ourn 'll keep their faces washed, you 'll know 'em
from their niggers.

Ain't *sech* things wuth secedin' for, an' gittin' red o' you
Thet waller in your low idees, an' will till all is blue ?
Fact is, we *air* a diff'rent race, an' I, for one, don't see,
Sech havin' ollers ben the case, how w' ever *did* agree.
It 's sunthin' thet you lab'rin'-folks up North hed ough'
to think on,

Thet Higgses can't bemean themselves to rulin' by a
Lincoln,—

Thet men, (an' guv'nors, tu,) thet hez sech Normal names
ez Pickens,
Accustomed to no kin' o' work, 'thout 't is to givin'
lickins,
Can't masure votes with folks thet git their livins from
their farms,
An' prob'ly think thet Law 's ez good ez hevin' coats
o' arms.
Sence I 've ben here, I 've hired a chap to look about
for me
To git me a transplantable an' thrifty fem'ly-tree,
An' he tells *me* the Sawins is ez much o' Normal blood
Ez Pickens an' the rest on 'em, an' older 'n Noah's
flood.
Your Normal schools wun't turn ye into Normals, for
it 's clear,
Ef eddykatin' done the thing, they 'd be some skurcer
here.
Pickenses, Boggses, Pettuses, Magoffins, Letchers,
Polks,—
Where can you scare up names like them among your
mudsill folks?
Ther' 's nothin' to compare with 'em, you 'd fin', ef you
should glance,
Among the tip-top femerlies in Englan', nor in France:
I've hearn from 'sponsible men whose word wuz full ez
good 's their note,

Men thet can run their face for drinks, an' keep a
Sunday coat,
Thet they wuz all on 'em come down, and come down
pooty fur,
From folks thet, 'thout their crowns wuz on, ou'doors
would n' never stir,
Nor thet ther' warn't a Southun man but wut wuz
primy fashy
O' the bes' blood in Europe, yis, an' Afriky an' Ashy:
Sech bein' the case, is 't likely we should bend like
cotton-wickin',
Or set down under anythin' so low-lived ez a lickin' ?
More 'n this,—hain't we the literatoor an' science, tu,
by gorry ?
Hain't we them intellectle twins, them giants, Simms
an' Maury,
Each with full twice the ushle brains, like nothin' thet
I know,
'Thout 't wuz a double-headed calf I see once to a show ?

For all thet, I warn't jest at fust in favor o' secedin' ;
I wuz for layin' low a spell to find out where 't wuz
leadin',
For hevin' South-Carliny try her hand at seprit-
nationin',
She takin' resks an' findin' funds, an' we coöpera-
tionin',—

I mean a kin' o' hangin' roun' an' settin' on the fence,
Till Prov'dunce pinte how to jump an' save the most
expense ;

I reecollected thet 'ere mine o' lead to Shirza Centre
Thet bust up Jabez Pettibone, an' did n't want to
ventur'

'Fore I wuz sartin wut come out ud pay for wut
went in,

For swappin' silver off for lead ain't the sure way
to win ;

(An', fact, it *doos* look now ez though—but folks must
live an' larn—

We should git lead, an' more 'n we want, out o' the
Old Consarn ;)

But when I see a man so wise an' honest ez Buchanan
A-lettin' us hev all the forts an' all the arms an' cannon,
Admittin' we wuz nat'lly right an' you wuz nat'lly
wrong,

Coz you wuz lab'rin'-folks an' we wuz wut they call
bong-tong,

An' coz there warn't no fight in ye more 'n in a mashed
potater,

While two o' *us* can't skurcely meet but wut we fight
by natur',

An' th' ain't a bar-room here would pay for openin'
on 't a night,

Without it giv the priverlege o' bein' shot at sight,

Which proves we 're Natur's noblemen, with whom it
don't surprise

The British aristoxty should feel boun' to sympathize,—
Seein' all this, an' seein', tu, the thing wuz strikin'
roots

While Uncle Sam sot still in hopes that some one 'd
bring his boots,

I thought th' ole Union's hoops wuz off, an' let myself
be sucked in

To rise a peg an' jine the crowd thet went for recon-
structin',—

Thet is, to hev the pardnership under th' ole name
continner

Jest ez it wuz, we drorrin' pay, you findin' bone an'
sinner,—

On'y to put it in the bond, an' enter 't in the journals,
Thet you 're the nat'ral rank an' file, an' we the nat'ral
kurnels.

Now this I thought a fees'ble plan, thet 'ud work
smooth ez grease,

Suitin' the Nineteenth Century an' Upper Ten idees,
An' there I meant to stick, an' so did most o' th'
leaders, tu,

Coz we all thought the chance wuz good o' puttin' on it
thru ;

But Jeff he hit upon a way o' helpin' on us forrard

By bein' unannermous,—a trick you ain't quite up to,
Norrard.

A baldin hain't no more 'f a chance with them new
apple-corers

Than folks's oppersition views against the Ringtail
Roarers ;

They 'll take 'em out on him 'bout east,—one canter on
a rail

Makes a man feel unannermous ez Jonah in the whale ;
Or ef he 's a slow-moulded cuss thet can't seem quite
t' agree,

He gits the noose by tellergraph upon the nighes' tree :
Their mission-work with Afrikins hez put 'em up,
thet 's sartin,

To all the mos' across-lot ways o' preachin' an' con-
vartin' ;

I 'll bet my hat th' ain't nary priest, nor all on 'em
together,

Thet cairs conviction to the min' like Reveren' Taran-
feather ;

Why, he sot up with me one night, an' labored to sech
purpose,

Thet. (ez an owl by daylight 'mongst a flock o' teazin'
chirpers

Sees clearer 'n mud the wickedness o' eatin' little birds)

I see my error an' agreed to shen it arterwurds ;

An' I should say, (to jedge our folks by facs in my
possession,)

Thet three 's Unannermous where one 's a 'Riginal
Secession ;
So it 's a thing you fellers North may safely bet your
chink on,
Thet we 're all water-proofed agin th' usurpin' reign o'
Lincoln.

Jeff 's *some*. He 's gut another plan thet hez pertic'lar
merits,
In givin' things a cherfle look an' stiffnin' loose-hung
sperits ;
For while your million papers, wut with lyin' an'
discussin',
Keep folks's tempers all on eend a-fumin' an' a-fussin',
A-wondrin' this an' guessin' thet, an' dreadin', every
night,
The breechin' o' the Univarse 'll break afore it 's light,
Our papers don't purtend to print on'y wut Guv'ment
choose,
An' thet insures us all to git the very best o' noose :
Jeff hez it of all sorts an' kines, an' sarves it out ez
wanted,
So 's 't every man gits wut he likes an' nobody ain't
scanted ;
Sometimes it 's vict'ries, (they 're 'bout all ther' is that 's
cheap down here,)
Sometimes it 's France an' England on the jump to
interfere.

Fact is, the less the people know o' wut ther' is a-doin',
The hendier 't is for Guv'ment, sence it henders trouble
brewin' ;

An' noose is like a shinplaster,—it 's good, ef you
believe it,

Or, wut 's all same, the other man thet 's goin' to
receive it :

Ef you 've a son in th' army, wy, it 's comfortin' to hear
He 'll hev no gretter resk to run than seein' th' in'my's
rear,

Coz, ef an F. F. looks at 'em, they ollers break an' run,
Or wilt right down ez debtors will thet stumble on a
dun

(An' this, ef an'thin', proves the wuth o' proper fem'ly
pride,

Fer sech mean shucks ez creditors are all on Lincoln's
side) ;

Ef I hev scrip thet wun't go off no more 'n a Belgin rifle,
An' read thet it 's at par on 'Change, it makes me feel
deli'fle ;

It 's cheerin', tu, where every man mus' fortify his bed,
To hear thet Freedom 's the one thing our darkies
mos'ly dread,

An' thet experunce, time 'n' agin, to Dixie's Land hez
shown

Ther' 's nothin' like a powder-cask f'r a stiddy corner-
stone ;

Ain't it ez good ez nuts, when salt is sellin' by the
ounce

For its own weight in Treash'ry-bons, (ef bought in
small amounts,)

When even whiskey's gittin' skurce, an' sugar can't be
found,

To know that all the ellerments o' luxury abound?

An' don't it glorify sal'-pork, to come to understand

It's wut the Richmon' editors call fatness o' the land?

Nex' thing to knowin' you're well off is *nut* to know
when y' ain't;

An' ef Jeff says all's goin'-wal, who 'll ventur' t' say it
ain't?

This cairn the Constitutooshun roun' ez Jeff doos in
his hat

Is hendier a dreffle sight, an' comes more kin' o' pat.

I tell ye wut, my jedgment is you're pooty sure to fail,

Ez long'z the head keeps turnin' back for counsel to
the tail:

Th' advantiges of our consarn for bein' prompt air gret,

While, 'long o' Congress, you can't strike, 'f you git an
iron het;

They bother roun' with argooiin', an' var'ous sorts o'
foolin',

To make sure ef it's leg'lly het, an' all the while it's
coolin',

So s 't when you come to strike, it ain't no gret to wish
ye j'y on,
An' hurts the hammer 'z much or more ez wut it doos
the iron.
Jeff don't allow no jawin'-sprees for three months at a
stretch,
Knowin' the ears long speeches suits air mostly made
to metch ;
He jes' ropes in your tonguey chaps an' reg'lar ten-inch
bores
An' lets 'em play at Congress, ef they 'll du it with
closed doors ;
So they ain't no more bothersome than ef we'd took
an' sunk 'em,
An' yit enj'y th' exclusive right to one another's Bun-
combe
'Thout doin' nobody no hurt, an' 'thout its costin'
nothin',
Their pay bein' jes' Confedrit funds, they findin' keep
an' clothin' ;
They taste the sweets o' public life, an' plan their little
jobs,
An' suck the Treash'ry, (no gret harm, for it's ez dry
ez cobs,)
An' go thru all the motions jest ez safe ez in a prison,
An' hev their business to themselves, while Buregard
hez hisn :

Ez long 'z he gives the Hessians fits, committees can't
make bother

'Bout whether 't's done the legle way or whether 't's
done the t'other.

An' *I* tell *you* you've gut to larn thet War ain't one
long teeter

Betwixt *I wan' to* an' '*T wun't du*, debatin' like a
skeetur

Afore he lights,—all is, to give the other side a millin',
An' arter thet 's done, th' ain't no resk but wut the
lor'll be willin' ;

No metter wut the guv'ment is, ez nigh ez *I* can hit it,
A lickin' 's constitooshunal, pervidin' *We* don't git it.
Jeff don't stan' dilly-dallyin', afore he takes a fort,
(With no one in,) to git the leave o' the nex' Soopreme
Court,

Nor don't want forty-'leven weeks o' jawin' an' ex-
poundin'

To prove a nigger hez a right to save him, ef he's
drowndin' ;

Whereas ole Abram 'd sink afore he 'd let a darkie
boost him,

Ef Taney should n't come along an' hed n't interdooced
him.

It ain't your twenty millions thet'll ever block Jeff's
game,

But one Man thet wun't let 'em jogjest ez he 's takin' aim :

Your numbers they may strengthen ye or weaken ye,
ez't heppens
They 're willin' to be helpin' hands or wuss'n-nothin'
cap'ns.

I've chose my side, an' 't ain't no odds ef I wuz drawed
with magnets,
Or ef I thought it prudenter to jine the nighes' bagnets ;
I've made my ch'ice, an' ciphared out, from all I see
an' heard,
Th' ole Constitooshun never 'd git her decks for action
cleared,
Long 'z you elect for Congressmen poor shotes thet
want to go
Coz they can't seem to git their grub no otherways
than so,
An' let your bes' men stay to home coz they wun't show
ez talkers,
Nor can't be hired to fool ye an' sof'-soap ye at
a caucus,—
Long 'z ye set by Rotashun more'n ye do by folks's
merits,
Ez though experunce thriv by change o' sile, like corn
an' kerrits,—
Long 'z you allow a critter's "claims" coz, spite o'
shoves an' tippins,
He's kep' his private pan jest where't would ketch
mos' public drippins,—

Long'z A. 'Il turn tu an' grin' B.'s exe, ef B. 'Il help
him grin' hisn,

(An' thet's the main idee by which your leadin' men
hev risen,)—

Long'z you let *ary* exe be groun', 'less't is to cut the
weasan'

O' sneaks thet dunno till they're told wut is an' wut
ain't Treason,—

Long'z ye give out commissions to a lot o' peddlin' drones
Thet trade in whiskey with their men an' skin 'em to
their bones,—

Long'z ye sift out "safe" canderdates thet no one ain't
afeared on

Coz they're so thund'rin' eminent for bein' never
heard on,

An' hain't no record, ez it's called, for folks to pick a
hole in,

Ez ef it hurt a man to hev a body with a soul in,

An' it wuz ostentashun to be showin' on't about,

When half his feller-citizens contrive to do without,—

Long'z you suppose your votes can turn biled kebbage
into brain,

An' ary man thet's pop'lar's fit to drive a lightnin'-
train,—

Long'z you believe democracy means *I'm ez good ez
you be,*

An' thet a feller from the ranks can't be a knave or
booby,—

Long 'z Congress seems purvided, like yer street-cars
an' yer 'busses,
With ollers room for jes' one more o' your spiled-in-
bakin' cusses,
Dough 'thout the emptins of a soul, an' yit with means
about 'em
(Like essence-peddlers*) thet'll make folks long to be
without 'em,
Jest heavy 'nough to turn a scale thet's doubtfule the
wrong way,
An' make their nat'ral arsenal o' bein' nasty pay,—
Long 'z them things last, (an' *I* don't see no gret signs
of improvin',)
I sha'n't up stakes, not hardly yit, nor't would n't pay
for movin';
For, 'fore you lick us, it'll be the long'st day ever *you*
see.
Yourn, (ez I 'xpec' to be nex' spring,)

B., MARKISS o' BIG BOOSY.

* A rustic euphemism for the American variety of the *Mephitis*.—H. W.

A MESSAGE OF JEFF DAVIS IN SECRET SESSION.

CONJECTURALLY REPORTED BY H. BIGLOW.

To the Editors of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Jaalam, 10th March, 1862.

GENTLEMEN,—My leisure has been so entirely occupied with the hitherto fruitless endeavour to decypher the Runick inscription whose fortunate discovery I mentioned in my last communication, that I have not found time to discuss, as I had intended, the great problem of what we are to do with slavery, a topick on which the publick mind in this place is at present more than ever agitated. What my wishes and hopes are I need not say, but for safe conclusions I do not conceive that we are yet in possession of facts enough on which to bottom them with certainty. Acknowledging the hand of Providence, as I do, in all events, I am sometimes inclined to think that they are wiser than we, and am willing to wait till we have made this continent once more a place where freemen can live in security and honour, before assuming any further responsibility. This is the view taken by my neighbour Habakkuk Sloansure, Esq., the president of our bank, whose opinion in the practical affairs of life has great weight with me, as I have generally found it to be justified by the event, and whose counsel, had I followed it, would have saved me from an unfortunate investment of a considerable part of the painful economies of half a century in the Northwest-Passage Tunnel.

After a somewhat animated discussion with this gentleman, a few days since, I expanded, on the *audi alteram partem* principle, something which he happened to say by way of illustration, into the following fable.

FESTINA LENTE.

ONCE on a time there was a pool
Fringed all about with flag-leaves cool
And spotted with cow-lilies garish,
Of frogs and pouts the ancient parish.
Alders the creaking redwings sink on,
Tussocks that house blithe Bob o' Lincoln
Hedged round the unassailed seclusion,
Where muskrats piled their cells Carthusian ;
And many a moss-embroidered log,
The watering-place of summer frog,
Slept and decayed with patient skill,
As watering-places sometimes will.

Now in this Abbey of Theleme,
Which realized the fairest dream,
That ever dozing bull-frog had,
Sunned on a half-sunk lily-pad,
There rose a party with a mission
To mend the polliwogs' condition,
Who notified the selectmen
To call a meeting there and then.
"Some kind of steps," they said, "are needed ;
They don't come on so fast as we did :
Let 's dock their tails ; if that don't make 'em
Frogs by brevet, the Old One take 'em !
That boy, that came the other day
To dig some flag-root down this way,
His jack-knife left, and 't is a sign
That Heaven approves of our design :
'T were wicked not to urge the step on,
When Providence has sent the weapon."

Old croakers, deacons of the mire,
That led the deep batrachian choir,

Uk ! Uk ! Caronk ! with bass that might
 Have left Lablache's out of sight,
 Shook nobby heads, and said, "No go !
 You 'd better let 'em try to grow :
 Old Doctor Time is slow, but still
 He does know how to make a pill."

But vain was all their hoarsest bass,
 Their old experience out of place,
 And spite of croaking and entreating,
 The vote was carried in marsh-meeting.

"Lord knows," protest the polliwogs,
 "We 're anxious to be grown-up frogs ;
 But do not undertake the work
 Of Nature till she prove a shirk ;
 'T is not by jumps that she advances,
 But wins her way by circumstances :
 Pray, wait awhile, until you know
 We 're so contrived as not to grow ;
 Let Nature take her own direction,
 And she 'll absorb our imperfection ;
You might n't like 'em to appear with,
 But we must have the things to steer with.

"No," piped the party of reform,
 "All great results are ta'en by storm ;
 Fate holds her best gifts till we show
 We 've strength to make her let them go :
 No more reject the Age's chrism,
 Your cues are an anachronism ;
 No more the Future's promise mock,
 But lay your tails upon the block,
 Thankful that we the means have voted
 To have you thus to frogs promoted."

The thing was done, the tails were cropped,
 And home each philotadpole hopped,
 In faith rewarded to exult,
 And wait the beautiful result.
 Too soon it came ; our pool, so long
 The theme of patriot bull-frogs' song,

Next day was reeking, fit to smother,
 With heads and tails that missed each other,—
 Here snoutless tails, there tailless snouts :
 The only gainers were the pouts.

MORAL.

From lower to the higher next,
 Not to the top, is Nature's text ;
 And embryo Good, to reach full stature,
 Absorbs the Evil in its nature.

I think that nothing will ever give permanent peace and security to this continent but the extirpation of Slavery therefrom, and that the occasion is nigh ; but I would do nothing hastily or vindictively, nor presume to jog the elbow of Providence. No desperate measures for me till we are sure that all others are hopeless,—*flectere si nequeo SUPEROS, Acheronta movebo*. To make Emancipation a reform instead of a revolution is worth a little patience, that we may have the Border States first, and then the non-slaveholders of the Cotton States with us in principle,—a consummation that seems to be nearer than many imagine. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*, is not to be taken in a literal sense by statesmen, whose problem is to get justice done with as little jar as possible to existing order, which has at least so much of heaven in it that it is not chaos. I rejoice in the President's late Message, which at last proclaims the Government on the side of freedom, justice, and sound policy.

As I write, comes the news of our disaster at Hampton Roads. I do not understand the supineness which, after fair warning, leaves wood to an unequal conflict with iron. It is not enough merely to have the right on our side, if we stick to the old flint-lock of tradition. I have observed in my parochial experience (*haud ignarus mali*) that the Devil is prompt to adopt the latest inventions of destructive warfare,

and may thus take even such a three-decker as Bishop Butler at an advantage. It is curious, that, as gunpowder made armour useless on shore, so armour is having its revenge by baffling its old enemy at sea,—and that, while gunpowder robbed land-warfare of nearly all its picturesqueness to give even greater stateliness and sublimity to a sea-fight, armour bids fair to degrade the latter into a squabble between two iron-shelled turtles.

Yours, with esteem and respect,

HOMER WILBUR, A.M.

P.S.—I had, well-nigh forgotten to say that the object of this letter is to enclose a communication from the gifted pen of Mr. Biglow.

I SENT you a messige, my friens, t' other day,
To tell you I'd nothin' pertickler to say :
'T wuz the day our new nation gut kin' o' stillborn,
So 't wuz my pleasant dooty t' acknowledge the corn,
An' I see clearly then, ef I did n't before,
Thet the *augur* in inauguration means *bore*.
I need n't tell *you* thet my messige wuz written
To diffuse correc' notions in France an' Gret Britten,
An' agin to impress on the poppylar mind
The comfort an' wisdom o' goin' it blind,—
To say thet I did n't abate not a hooter
O' my faith in a happy an' glorious futur,'
Ez rich in each soshle an' p'litickle blessin'
Ez them thet we now hed the joy o' possessin',
With a people united, an' longin' to die

For wut *we* call their country, without askin' why,
An' all the gret things we concluded to slope for
Ez much within reach now ez ever—to hope for.
We've all o' the ellerments, this very hour,
Thet make up a fus'-class, self-governin' power :
We've a war, an' a debt, an' a flag ; an' ef this
Ain't to be inderpendunt, why, wut on airth is ?
An' nothin' now henders our takin' our station
Ez the freest, enlightenedest, civerlized nation,
Built up on our bran'-new politickle thesis
Thet a Gov'ment's fust right is to tumble to pieces,—
I say nothin' henders our takin' our place
Ez the very fus'-best o' the whole human race,
A-spittin' tobacker ez proud ez you please
On Victory's bes' carpets, or loafin' at ease
In the Tool'ries front-parlor, discussin' affairs
With our heels on the backs o' Napoleon's new chairs,
An' princes a-mixin' our cocktails an' slings,—
Excep', wal, excep' jest a very few things,
Sech ez navies an' armies an' wherewith to pay,
An' gittin' our sogers to run t'other way,
An' not be too over-pertickler in tryin'
To hunt up the very las' ditches to die in.

Ther' are critters so base thet they want it explained
Jes' wut is the totle amount thet we've gained,
Ez ef we could maysure stupenjious events

By the low Yankee stan'ard o' dollars an' cents :
 They seem to forgit, thet, sence last year revolved,
 We 've succeeded in gittin' seceshed an' dissolved,
 An' thet no one can't hope to git thru dissolootion
 'Thout some kin' o' strain on the best Constitootion.
 Who asks for a prospec' more flettrin' an' bright,
 When from here clean to Texas it's all one free fight ?
 Hain't we rescued from Seward the gret leadin' featur
 Thet makes it wuth while to be reasonin' creaturs ?
 Hain't we saved Habus Coppers, improved it in fact,
 By suspendin' the Unionists 'stid o' the Act ?
 Ain't the laws free to all ? Where on airth else d' ye
 see
 Every freeman improvin' his own rope an' tree ?

It's ne'ssary to take a good confident tone
With the public ; but here, jest amongst us, I own
Things looks blacker 'n thunder. Ther' 's no use
 denyin'

We're clean out o' money, an' 'most out o' lyin',—
Two things a young nation can't mennage without,
Ef she wants to look wal at her fust comin' out ;
For the fust supplies physickle strength, while the
second

Gives a morril advantage thet 's hard to be reckoned :
For this latter I 'm willin' to du wut I can ;
For the former you 'll hev to consult on a plan,—

Though our *rust* want (an' this pint I want your best
views on)

Is plausible paper to print I. O. U.s on.

Some gennlemen think it would cure all our cankers

In the way o' finance, ef we jes' hanged the bankers ;

An' I own the proposle 'ud square with my views,

Ef their lives wuz n't all thet we 'd left 'em to lose.

Some say thet more confidence might be inspired,

Ef we voted our cities an' towns to be fired,—

A plan thet 'ud suttently tax our endurance,

Coz 't would be our own bills we should git for th'
insurance ;

But cinders, no metter how sacred we think 'em,

Might n't strike furrin minds ez good sources of income,

Nor the people, perhaps, would n't like the eclaw

O' bein' all turned into paytriots by law.

Some want we should buy all the cotton an' burn it,

On a pledge, when we 've gut thru the war, to return
it,—

Then to take the proceeds an' hold *them* ez security

For an issue o' bonds to be met at maturity

With an issue o' notes to be paid in hard cash

On the fus' Monday follerin' the 'tarnal Allsmash :

This hez a safe air, an', once hold o' the gold,

'Ud leave our vile plunderers out in the cold,

An' *might* temp' John Bull, ef it warn't for the dip he

Once gut from the banks o' my own Massissippi.

Some think we could make, by arrangin' the figgers,
A hendy home-currency out of our niggers ;
But it wun't du to lean much on ary sech staff,
For they 're gittin' tu current a'ready, by half.
One gennleman says, ef we lef' our loan out
Where Floyd could git hold on 't, *he* 'd take it, no
doubt ;

But 't ain't jes' the takin', though 't hez a good look,
We mus' git sunthin' out on it arter it's took,
An' we need now more 'n ever, with sorrer I own,
Thet some one another should let us a loan,
Sence a soger wun't fight, on'y jes' while he draws his
Pay down on the nail, for the best of all causes,
'Thout askin' to know wut the quarrel 's about,—
An' once come to thet, why, our game is played out.
It 's ez true ez though I should n't never hev said it
Thet a hitch hez took place in our system o' credit ;
I swear it 's all right in my speeches an' messiges,
But ther' 's idees afloat, ez ther' is about sessiges :
Folks wun't take a bond ez a basis to trade on,
Without nosin' round to find out wut it 's made on,
An' the thought more an' more thru the public min'
crosses

Thet our Treshry hez gut 'mos' too many dead hosses.
Wut 's called credit, you see, is some like a balloon,
Thet looks while it 's up 'most ez harnsome 'z a moon,
But once git a leak in 't an' wut looked so grand

Caves righ' down in a jiffy ez flat ez your hand.
Now the world is a dreffle mean place, for our sins,
Where ther' ollus is critters about with long pins
A-prickin' the globes we've blowed up with sech care,
An' provin' ther' 's nothin' inside but bad air :
They 're all Stuart Millses, poor-white trash, an' sneaks,
Without no more chivverlry 'n Choctaws or Creeks,
Who think a real gennleman's promise to pay
Is meant to be took in trade's ornery way :
Them fellers an' I could n' never agree ;
They 're the nateral foes o' the Southun Idee ;
I 'd gladly take all of our other resks on me
To be red o' this low-lived politikle 'con'my!

Now a dastardly notion is gittin' about
Thet our bladder is bust an' the gas oozin' out,
An' onless we can mennage in some way to stop it,
Why, the thing 's a gone coon, an' we might ez wal
drop it.

Brag works wal at fust, but it ain't jes' the thing
For a stiddy inves'ment the shiners to bring,
An' votin' we 're prosp'rous a hundred times over
Wun't change bein' starved into livin' on clover.
Manassas done sunthin' tow'rds drawin' the wool
O'er the green, anti-slavery eyes o' John Bull :
Oh, *warn't* it a godsend, jes' when sech tight fixes
Wuz crowdin' us mourners, to throw double-sixes !

I wuz tempted to think, an' it wuz n't no wonder,
Ther' wuz reelly a Providence,—over or under,—
When, all packed for Nashville, I fust ascertained
From the papers up North wut a victory we 'd gained.
'T wuz the time for diffusin' correc' views abroad
Of our union an' strength an' relyin' on God ;
An', fact, when I 'd gut thru my fust big surprise,
I much ez half b'lieved in my own tallest lies,
An' conveyed the idee thet the whole Southun popper-
lace

Wuz Spartans all on the keen jump for Thermopperlies,
Thet set on the Lincolnites' bombs till they bust,
An' fight for the priv'lege o' dyin' the fust ;
But Roanoke, Bufort, Millspring, an' the rest
Of our recent starn-foremost successes out West,
Hain't left us a foot for our swellin' to stand on,—
We 've showed *too* much o' wut Buregard calls
abandon,

For all our Thermopperlies (an' it 's a marcy
We hain't hed no more) hev ben clean vicy-varsy,
An' wut Spartans wuz lef' when the battle wuz done
Wuz them thet wuz too unambitious to run.

Oh, ef we hed on'y jes' gut Reecognition,
Things now would ha' ben in a different position !
You 'd ha' hed all you wanted : the paper blockade
Smashed up into toothpicks,—unlimited trade

In the one thing thet 's needfle, till niggers, I swow,
Hed ben thicker 'n provisional shinplasters now,—
Quinine by the ton 'ginst the shakes when they
seize ye,—

Nice paper to coin into C. S. A. specie ;
The voice of the driver 'd be heerd in our land,
An' the univarse scringe, ef we lifted our hand :
Would n't *thet* be some like a fulfillin' the prophecies,
With all the fus' fem'lies in all the best offices ?
'T wuz a beautiful dream, an' all sorrer is idle,—
But *ef* Lincoln *would* ha' hanged Mason an' Slidell !
They ain't 'o no good in Européan pellices,
But think wut a help they 'd ha' ben on their
gallowses !
They 'd ha' felt they wuz truly fulfillin' their mission,
An', oh, how dog-cheap we 'd ha' gut Reecognition !

But somehow another, wutever we 've tried,
Though the the'ry 's fust-rate, the facts *wun't* coincide :
Facts are contrary 'z mules, an' ez hard in the mouth,
An' they allus hev showed a mean spite to the South.
Sech bein' the case, we hed best look about
For some kin' o' way to slip *our* necks out :
Le' 's vote our las' dollar, ef one can be found,
(An', at any rate, votin' it hez a good sound,)—
Le' 's swear thet to arms all our people is flyin',
(The critters can't read, an' wun't know how we 're
lyin',)—

Thet Toombs is advancin' to sack Cincinnater,
With a rovin' commission to pillage an' slarter,—
Thet we've throwed to the winds all regard for wut's
lawfle,
An' gone in for sunthin' promiscu'sly awfle.
Ye see, hitherto, it's our own knaves an' fools
Thet we've used,—those for whetstones, an' t' others
ez tools,—
An' now our las' chance is in puttin' to test
The same kin' o' cattle up North an' out West.
I—— But, Gennlemen, here's a despatch jes' come in
Which shows thet the tide's begun turnin' agin,—
Gret Cornfedrit success! C'lumbus eevacooated!
I mus' run down an' hev the thing properly stated,
An' show wut a triumph it is, an' how lucky
To fin'ly git red o' thet cussed Kentucky,—
An' how, sence Fort Donelson, winnin' the day
Consists in triumphantly gittin' away.

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SPEECH OF HONOURABLE PRESERVED DOE IN SECRET CAUCUS.

To the Editors of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Jaalam, 12th April, 1862.

GENTLEMEN,—As I cannot but hope that the ultimate, if not speedy, success of the national arms is now sufficiently ascertained, sure as I am of the righteousness of our cause and its consequent claim on the blessing of God, (for I would not show a faith inferior to that of the pagan historian with his *Facile evenit quod Dts cordi est*,) it seems to me a suitable occasion to withdraw our minds a moment from the confusing din of battle to objects of peaceful and permanent interest. Let us not neglect the monuments of preterite history because what shall be history is so diligently making under our eyes. *Cras ingens iterabimus æquor*; to-morrow will be time enough for that stormy sea; to-day let me engage the attention of your readers with the Runick inscription to whose fortunate discovery I have heretofore alluded. Well may we say with the poet, *Multa renascuntur quæ jam cecidere*. And I would premise, that, although I can no longer resist the evidence of my own senses from the stone before me to the ante-Columbian discovery of this continent by the Northmen, *gens inclytissima*, as they are called in a Palermitan inscription, written fortunately in a less debatable character than that which I am about to decypher, yet I would by no means be understood as wishing to vilipend the merits of the great Genoese, whose name will never be forgotten so long as the inspiring strains

of "Hail Columbia" shall continue to be heard. Though he must be stripped also of whatever praise may belong to the experiment of the egg, which I find proverbially attributed by Castilian authours to a certain Juanito or Jack, (perhaps an offshoot of our giant-killing mythus,) his name will still remain one of the most illustrious of modern times. But the impartial historian owes a duty likewise to obscure merit, and my solicitude to render a tardy justice is perhaps quickened by my having known those who, had their own field of labour been less secluded, might have found a readier acceptance with the reading publick. I could give an example, but I forbear: *forsitan nostris ex ossibus oritur ultor.*

Touching Runick inscriptions, I find that they may be classed under three general heads: 1°. Those which are understood by the Danish Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and Professor Rafn, their Secretary; 2°. Those which are comprehensible only by Mr. Rafn; and 3°. Those which neither the Society, Mr. Rafn, nor anybody else can be said in any definite sense to understand, and which accordingly offer peculiar temptations to enucleating sagacity. These last are naturally deemed the most valuable by intelligent antiquaries, and to this class the stone now in my possession fortunately belongs. Such give a picturesque variety to ancient events, because susceptible oftentimes of as many interpretations as there are individual archæologists; and since facts are only the pulp in which the Idea or event-seed is softly imbedded till it ripen, it is of little consequence what colour or flavour we attribute to them, provided it be agreeable. Availing myself of the obliging assistance of Mr. Arphaxad Bowers, an ingenious photographick artist, whose house-on-wheels has now stood for three years on our Meeting-House Green, with the somewhat contradictory inscription,—"*our motto is onward,*"—I have sent accurate copies of my treasure to many

learned men and societies, both native and European. I may hereafter communicate their different and (*me judice*) equally erroneous solutions. I solicit also, Messrs. Editors, your own acceptance of the copy herewith inclosed. I need only premise further, that the stone itself is a goodly block of metamorphick sandstone, and that the Runes resemble very nearly the ornithichnites or fossil bird-tracks of Dr. Hitchcock, but with less regularity or apparent design than is displayed by those remarkable geological monuments. These are rather the *non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum*. Resolved to leave no door open to cavil, I first of all attempted the elucidation of this remarkable example of lithick literature by the ordinary modes, but with no adequate return for my labour. I then considered myself amply justified in resorting to that heroick treatment the felicity of which, as applied by the great Bentley to Milton, had long ago enlisted my admiration. Indeed, I had already made up my mind, that, in case good-fortune should throw any such invaluable record in my way, I would proceed with it in the following simple and satisfactory method. After a cursory examination, merely sufficing for an approximative estimate of its length, I would write down a hypothetical inscription based upon antecedent probabilities, and then proceed to extract from the characters engraven on the stone a meaning as nearly as possible conformed to this *a priori* product of my own ingenuity. The result more than justified my hopes, inasmuch as the two inscriptions were made without any great violence to tally in all essential particulars. I then proceeded, not without some anxiety, to my second test, which was, to read the Runick letters diagonally, and again with the same success. With an excitement pardonable under the circumstances, yet tempered with thankful humility, I now applied my last and severest trial, my *experimentum crucis*. I turned the stone, now doubly precious

in my eyes, with scrupulous exactness upside down. The physical exertion so far displaced my spectacles as to derange for a moment the focus of vision. I confess that it was with some tremulousness that I readjusted them upon my nose, and prepared my mind to bear with calmness any disappointment that might ensue. But, *O albo dies notanda lapillo!* what was my delight to find that the change of position had effected none in the sense of the writing, even by so much as a single letter! I was now, and justly, as I think, satisfied of the conscientious exactness of my interpretation. It is as follows :—

HERE

BJARNA GRÍM'LFSSON

FIRST DRANK CLOUD-BROTHER

THROUGH CHILD-OF-LAND-AND-WATER :

that is, drew smoke through a reed stem. In other words, we have here a record of the first smoking of the herb *Nicotiana Tabacum* by a European on this continent. The probable results of this discovery are so vast as to baffle conjecture. If it be objected, that the smoking of a pipe would hardly justify the setting up of a memorial stone, I answer, that even now the Moquis Indian, ere he takes his first whiff, bows reverently toward the four quarters of the sky in succession, and that the loftiest monuments have been reared to perpetuate fame, which is the dream of the shadow of smoke. The *Saga*, it will be remembered, leaves this Bjarna to a fate something like that of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, on board a sinking ship in the "wormy sea," having generously given up his place in the boat to a certain Icelfander. It is doubly pleasant, therefore, to meet with this proof that the brave old man arrived safely in Vinland, and that his declining years were cheered by the

respectful attentions of the dusky denizens of our then uninhabited forests. Most of all was I gratified, however, in thus linking for ever the name of my native town with one of the most momentous occurrences of modern times. Hitherto Jaalam, though in soil, climate, and geographical position as highly qualified to be the theatre of remarkable historical incidents as any spot on the earth's surface, has been, if I may say it without seeming to question the wisdom of Providence, almost maliciously neglected, as it might appear, by occurrences of world-wide interest in want of a situation. And in matters of this nature it must be confessed that adequate events are as necessary as the *vates sacer* to record them. Jaalam stood always modestly ready, but circumstances made no fitting response to her generous intentions. Now, however, she assumes her place on the historick roll. I have hitherto been a zealous opponent of the Circean herb, but I shall now re-examine the question without bias.

I am aware that the Rev. Jonas Tutchel, in a recent communication to the Bogus Four Corners Weekly Meridian, has endeavoured to show that this is the sepulchral inscription of Thorwald Eriksson, who, as is well known, was slain in Vinland by the natives. But I think he has been misled by a preconceived theory, and cannot but feel that he has thus made an ungracious return for my allowing him to inspect the stone with the aid of my own glasses (he having by accident left his at home) and in my own study. The heathen ancients might have instructed this Christian minister in the rites of hospitality; but much is to be pardoned to the spirit of self-love. He must indeed be ingenious who can make out the words *hèr hvílir* from any characters in the inscription in question, which, whatever else it may be, is certainly not mortuary. And even should the reverend gentleman succeed in persuading some fantastical wits of the soundness of his views, I do not

see what useful end he will have gained. For if the English Courts of Law hold the testimony of grave-stones from the burial-grounds of Protestant dissenters to be questionable, even where it is essential in proving a descent, I cannot conceive that the epitaphial assertions of heathens should be esteemed of more authority by any man of orthodox sentiments.

At this moment, happening to cast my eyes upon the stone, on which a transverse light from my southern window brings out the characters with singular distinctness, another interpretation has occurred to me, promising even more interesting results. I hasten to close my letter in order to follow at once the clue thus providentially suggested.

I inclose, as usual, a contribution from Mr. Biglow, and remain,

Gentlemen, with esteem and respect,

Your Obedient Humble Servant,

HOMER WILBUR, A.M.

I THANK ye, my friens, for the warmth o' your greetin' :
Ther' 's few airthly blessins but wut 's vain an' fleetin' ;
But ef ther' is one thet hain't *no* cracks an' flaws,
An' is wuth goin' in for, it 's pop'lar applause ;
It sends up the sperits ez lively ez rockets,
An' I feel it—wal, down to the eend o' my pockets.
Jes' lovin' the people is Canaan in view,
But it 's Canaan paid quarterly t' hev 'em love you ;
It 's a blessin' thet 's breakin' out ollus in fresh spots ;
It 's a-follerin' Moses 'thout losin' the flesh-pots.

But, Gennlemen, 'scuse me, I ain't sech a raw cus
Ez to go luggin' ellerkence into a caucus,—
Thet is, into one where the call comprehens
Nut the People in person, but on'y their friens ;
I 'm so kin' o' used to convincin' the masses
Of th' edvantage o' bein' self-governin' asses,
I forgut thet *we* 're all o' the sort thet pull wires
An' arrange for the public their wants an' desires,
An' thet wut we hed met for wuz jes' to agree
Wut the People's opinions in futur' should be.

But to come to the nub, we 've ben all disappointed,
An' our leadin' idees are a kind o' disjinted,—
Though, fur ez the nateral man could discern,
Things ough' to ha' took most an oppersite turn.
But The'ry is jes' like a train on the rail,
Thet, weather or no, puts her thru without fail,
While Fac's the ole stage thet gits sloughed in the ruts,
An' hez to allow for your darned efs an' buts,
An' so, nut intendin' no pers'nal reflections,
They don't—don't nut allus, thet is,—make connec-
tions :

Sometimes, when it really doos seem thet they'd
oughter

Combine jest ez kindly ez new rum an' water,
Both 'll be jest ez sot in their ways ez a bagnet,
Ez otherwise-minded ez th' eends of a magnet,

An' folks like you 'n me, thet ain't ept to be sold,
Git somehow or 'nother left out in the cold.

I expected 'fore this, 'thout no gret of a row,
Jeff D. would ha' ben where A. Lincoln is now,
With Taney to say 't wuz all legle an' fair,
An' a jury o' Deemocrats ready to swear
Thet the ingin o' State gut throwed into the ditch
By the fault o' the North in misplacin' the switch.
Things wuz ripenin' fust-rate with Buchanan to nuss
'em ;

But the People they would n't be Mexicans, cuss 'em !
Ain't the safeguards o' freedom upsot, 'z you may say,
Ef the right o' rev'lution is took clean away ?
An' does n't the right primy-fashy include
The bein' entitled to nut be subdued ?
The fact is, we 'd gone for the Union so strong,
When Union meant South ollus right an' North
wrong,

Thet the people gut fooled into thinkin' it might
Worry on middlin' wal with the North in the right.
We might ha' ben now jest ez prosp'rous ez France,
Where politikle enterprise hez a fair chance,
An' the people is heppy an' proud et this hour,
Long ez they hev the votes, to let Nap hev the power ;
But *our* folks they went an' believed wut we'd told
'em,

An', the flag once insulted, no mortle could hold 'em.
'T wuz pervokin' jest when we wuz cert'in to win,—
An' I, for one, wunt trust the masses agin :
For a people thet knows much ain't fit to be free
In the self-cockin', back-action style o' J. D.

I can't believe now but wut half on 't is lies ;
For who 'd thought the North wuz a-goin' to rise,
Or take the pervokin'est kin' of a stump,
'Thout 't wuz sunthin' ez pressin' ez Gabr'el's las'
trump ?

Or who 'd ha' supposed, arter *sech* swell an' bluster
'Bout the lick-ary-ten-on-ye fighters they 'd muster,
Raised by hand on briled lightnin', ez op'lent'z you
please

In a primitive furrest o' femmily-trees,
Who 'd ha' thought thet them Southuners ever 'ud
show

Starns with pedigrees to 'em like theirn to the foe,
Or, when the vamosin' come, ever to find
Nat'ral masters in front an' mean white folks behind ?
By ginger, ef I 'd ha' known half I know now,
When I wuz to Congress, I would n't, I swow,
Hev let 'em cair on so high-minded an' sarsy,
'Thout *some* show o' wut you may call vicy-varsy.
To be sure, we wuz under a contrac' jes' then
To be dreffle forbearin' towards Southun men ;

We hed to go sheers in preservin' the bellance :
An' ez they seemed to feel they wuz wastin' their
telltents
'Thout some un to kick, 't warn't more 'n proper, you
know,
Each should funnish his part ; an' sence they found
the toe,
An' we wuz n't cherubs—wal, we found the buffer,
For fear thet the Compromise System should suffer.

I wun't say the plan hed n't onpleasant featur,—
For men are perverse an' onreasonin' creaturs,
An' forgot thet in this life 't ain't likely to heppen
Their own privit fancy should ollus be cappen,—
But it worked jest ez smooth ez the key of a safe,
An' the gret Union bearins played free from all chafe.
They warn't hard to suit, ef they hed their own way ;
An' we (thet is, some on us) made the thing pay :
'T wuz a fair give-an'-take out of Uncle Sam's heap ;
Ef they took wut warn't theirn, wut we give come ez
cheap ;
The elect gut the offices down to tidewaiter,
The people took skinnin' ez mild ez a tater,
Seemed to choose who they wanted tu, footed the bills,
An' felt kind o' 'z though they wuz havin' their wills,
Which kep' 'em ez harmless an' cherfle ez crickets,
While all we invested wuz names on the tickets :

Wal, ther' 's nothin' for folks fond o' lib'ral consump-
tion,

Free o' charge, like democ'acy tempered with gumption !

Now warn't thet a system wuth pains in presarvin',
Where the people found jints an' their friens done the
carvin',—

Where the many done all o' their thinkin' by proxy,
An' were proud on 't ez long ez 't wuz christened
Democ'cy,—

Where the few let us sap all o' Freedom's foundations,
Ef you called it reformin' with prudence an' patience,
An' were willin' Jeff's snake-egg should hetch with
the rest,

Ef you writ "Constitootional" over the nest ?
But it's all out o' kilter, ('t wuz too good to last,)
An' all jes' by J. D.'s perceedin' too fast ;
Ef he'd on'y hung on for a month or two more,
We'd ha' gut things fixed nicer'n they hed ben before :
Afore he drawed off an' lef' all in confusion,
We wuz safely intrenched in the ole Constitootion,
With an outlyin', heavy-gun, casemated fort
To rake all assailants,—I mean th' S. J. Court.
Now I never 'll acknowledge (nut ef you should skin me)
'T wuz wise to abandon sech works to the in'my,
An' let him fin' out thet wut scared him so long,
Our whole line of argyments, lookin' so strong,

All our Scriptur' an' law, every the'ry an' fac',
Wuz Quaker-guns daubed with Pro-slavery black.
Why, ef the Republicans ever should git
Andy Johnson or some one to lend 'em the wit
An' the spunk jes' to mount Constitootion an' Court
With Columbiad guns, your real ekle-rights sort,
Or drill out the spike from the ole Declaration
Thet can kerry a solid shot clearn roun' creation,
We 'd better take maysures for shettin' up shop,
An' put off our stock by a vendoo or swop.

But they wun't never dare tu ; you 'll see 'em in Edom
'Fore they ventur' to go where their doctrines 'ud
lead 'em :

They 've ben takin' our princerples up ez we dropt 'em,
An' thought it wuz terrible 'cute to adopt 'em ;
But they'll fin' out 'fore long thet their hope's ben
deceivin' 'em,

An' thet princerples ain't o' no good, ef you b'lieve
in 'em ;

It makes 'em tu stiff for a party to use,
Where they 'd ough' to be easy 'z an ole pair o' shoes.
If *we* say 'n our pletform thet all men are brothers,
We don't mean thet some folks ain't more so 'n some
others ;

An' it's wal understood thet we make a selection,
An' thet brotherhood kin' o' subsides arter 'lection.

The fust thing for sound politicians to larn is,
Thet Truth, to dror kindly in all sorts o' harness,
Mus' be kep' in the abstract,—for, come to apply it,
You're ept to hurt some folks's interists by it.
Wal, these 'ere Republicans (some on 'em) acs
Ez though ginerall mexims 'ud suit speshle facs ;
An' there's where we'll nick 'em, there's where they'll
be lost :

For applyin' your princerple's wut makes it cost,
An' folks don't want Fourth o' July t' interfere
With the business-consarns o' the rest o' the year,
No more 'n they want Sunday to pry an' to peek
Into wut they are doin' the rest o' the week.

A ginooine statesman should be on his guard,
Ef he *must* hev beliefs, nut to b'lieve 'em tu hard ;
For, ez sure ez he does, he'll be blartin' 'em out
'Thout regardin' the natur' o' man more 'n a spout,
Nor it don't ask much gumption to pick out a flaw
In a party whose leaders are loose in the jaw :
An' so in our own case I ventur' to hint
Thet we'd better nut air our perceedins in print,
Nor pass resserlootions ez long ez your arm
Thet may, ez things heppen to turn, do us harm ;
For when you've done all your real meanin' to smother,
The darned things'll up an' mean sunthin' or 'nother.
Jeff'son prob'ly meant wal with his "born free an' ekle,"

But it's turned out a real crooked stick in the sekle ;
It's taken full eighty-odd year—don't you see ?—
From the pop'lar belief to root out thet idee,
An', arter all, sprouts on 't keep on buddin' forth
In the nat'lly onprincipled mind o' the North.
No, never say nothin' without you 're compelled tu,
An' then don't say nothin' thet you can be held tu,
Nor don't leave no friction-idees layin' loose
For the ign'ant to put to incend'ary use.

You know I'm a feller thet keeps a skinned eye
On the leetle events thet go skurryin' by,
Coz it's of'ner by them than by gret ones you'll see
Wut the p'litickle weather is likely to be.
Now I don't think the South's more 'n begun to be
licked,
But I *du* think, ez Jeff says, the wind-bag's gut pricked ;
It'll blow for a spell an' keep puffin' an' wheezin',
The tighter our army an' navy keep squeezin',—
For they can't help spread-eaglein' long 'z ther' 's a
mouth
To blow Enfield's Speaker thru lef' at the South.
But it's high time for us to be settin' our faces
Towards reconstructin' the national basis,
With an eye to beginnin' agin on the jolly ticks
We used to chalk up 'hind the back-door o' politics ;
An' the fus' thing's to save wut of Slav'ry ther' 's lef'

Arter this (I mus' call it) imprudence o' Jeff :
For a real good Abuse, with its roots fur an' wide,
Is the kin' o' thing *I* like to hev on my side ;
A Scriptur' name makes it ez sweet ez a rose,
An' it's tougher the older an' uglier it grows—
(I ain't speakin' now o' the righteousness of it,
But the p'litickle purchase it gives, an' the profit).

Things look pooty squally, it must be allowed,
An' I don't see much signs of a bow in the cloud :
Ther' 's too many Deemocrats—leaders, wut 's wuss—
Thet go for the Union 'thout carin' a cuss
Ef it helps ary party thet ever wuz heard on,
So our eagle ain't made a split Austrian bird on.
But ther' 's still some conservative signs to be found
Thet shows the gret heart o' the People is sound :
(Excuse me for usin' a stump-phrase agin,
But, once in the way on 't, they *will* stick like sin :)
There 's Phillips, for instance, hez jes' ketched a Tartar
In the Law-'n'-Order Party of ole Cincinnater ;
An' the Compromise System ain't gone out o' reach,
Long 'z you keep the right limits on freedom o' speech
'T warn't none too late, neither, to put on the gag,
For he 's dangerous now he goes in for the flag :
Nut thet I altogether approve o' bad eggs,
They 're mos' gin'lly argymunt on its las' legs,—
An' their logic is ept to be tu indiscriminate,

Nor don't ollus wait the right objects to 'liminate ;
But there is a variety on 'em, you 'll find,
Jest ez usefle an' more, besides bein' refined,—
I mean o' the sort thet are laid by the dictionary,
Sech ez sophisms an' cant thet 'll kerry conviction ary
Way thet you want to the right class o' men,
An' are staler than all 't ever come from a hen :
" Disunion " done wal till our resh Southun friends
Took the savor all out on 't for national ends ;
But I guess " Abolition " 'll work a spell yit,
When the war's done, an' so will " Forgive-an'-
forgit."

Times mus' be pooty thoroughly out o' all jint,
Ef we can't make a good constitootional pint ;
An' the good time 'll come to be grindin' our exes,
When the war goes to seed in the nettle o' texes :
Ef Jon'than don't squirm, with sech helps to assist him,
I give up my faith in the free-suffrage system ;
Democ'cy wun't be nut a mite interestin',
Nor p'litikle capital much wuth investin' ;
An' my notion is, to keep dark an' lay low
Till we see the right minute to put in our blow.—

But I've talked longer now 'n I hed any idee,
An' ther' 's others you want to hear more 'n you du me ;
So I'll set down an' give thet 'ere bottle a skrimmage,
For I've spoke till I'm dry ez a real graven image.

SUNTHIN' IN THE PASTORAL LINE.

To the Editors of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Jaalam, 17th May, 1862.

GENTLEMEN,—At the special request of Mr. Biglow, I intended to inclose, together with his own contribution, (into which, at my suggestion, he has thrown a little more of pastoral sentiment than usual,) some passages from my sermon on the day of the National Fast, from the text, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them," *Heb. xiii. 3.* But I have not leisure sufficient at present for the copying of them, even were I altogether satisfied with the production as it stands. I should prefer, I confess, to contribute the entire discourse to the pages of your respectable miscellany, if it should be found acceptable upon perusal, especially as I find the difficulty of selection of greater magnitude than I had anticipated. What passes without challenge in the fervour of oral delivery, cannot always stand the colder criticism of the closet. I am not so great an enemy of Eloquence as my friend Mr. Biglow would appear to be from some passages in his contribution for the current month. I would not, indeed, hastily suspect him of covertly glancing at myself in his somewhat caustick animadversions, albeit some of the phrases he girds at are not entire strangers to my lips. I am a more hearty admirer of the Puritans than seems now to be the fashion, and believe, that, if they Hebraized a little too much in their speech, they showed remarkable practical sagacity as

statesmen and founders. But such phenomena as Puritanism are the results rather of great religious than merely social convulsions, and do not long survive them. So soon as an earnest conviction has cooled into a phrase, its work is over, and the best that can be done with it is to bury it. *Ite, missa est.* I am inclined to agree with Mr. Biglow that we cannot settle the great political questions which are now presenting themselves to the nation by the opinions of Jeremiah or Ezekiel as to the wants and duties of the Jews in their time, nor do I believe that an entire community with their feelings and views would be practicable or even agreeable at the present day. At the same time I could wish that their habit of subordinating the actual to the moral, the flesh to the spirit, and this world to the other were more common. They had found out, at least, the great military secret that soul weighs more than body.—But I am suddenly called to a sick-bed in the household of a valued parishioner.

With esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR.

ONCE git a smell o' musk into a draw
An' it clings hold like precerents in law :
Your gran'ma'am put it there,—when, goodness knows,—
To jes' this-worldify her Sunday-clo'es ;
But the old chist wun't sarve her gran'son's wife,
(For, 'thout new funnitoor, wut good in life ?)
An' so ole clawfoot, from the precinks dread
O' the spare chamber, slinks into the shed,

Where, dim with dust, it fust or last subsides
To holdin' seeds an' fifty things besides ;
But better days stick fast in heart an' husk,
An' all you keep in 't gits a scent o' musk.

Jes' so with poets : wut they 've airly read
Gits kind o' worked into their heart an' head,
So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest on sheers
With furrin countries or played-out ideers,
Nor hev a feelin', ef it doos n't smack
O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way back :
This makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks, an' things,
Ez though we 'd nothin' here that blows an' sings,—
(Why, I 'd give more for one live bobolink
Than a square mile o' larks in printer's ink,)—
This makes 'em think our fust o' May is May,
Which 't ain't, for all the almanicks can say.

O little city-gals, don't never go it
Blind on the word o' noospaper or poet !
They're apt to puff, an' May-day seldom looks
Up in the country ez it doos in books ;
They're no more like than hornets'-nests an' hives,
Or printed sarmons be to holy lives.
I, with my trousers perched on cow-hide boots,
Tuggin' my foundered feet out by the roots,
Hev seen ye come to fling on April's hearse

Your muslin nosegays from the milliner's,
Puzzlin' to find dry ground your queen to choose,
An' dance your throats sore in morocker shoes :
I've seen ye an' felt proud, thet, come wut would,
Our Pilgrim stock wuz pithed with hardihood.
Pleasure doos make us Yankees kind o' winch,
Ez though 't wuz sunthin' paid for by the inch ;
But yit we du contrive to worry thru,
Ef Dooty tells us thet the thing 's to du,
An' kerry a hollerday, ef we set out,
Ez stiddily ez though 't wuz a redoubt.

I, country-born an' bred, know where to find
Some blooms thet make the season suit the mind,
An' seem to metch the doubtin' bluebird's notes,—
Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,
Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef you oncurl,
Each on 'em 's cradle to a baby-pearl,—
But these are jes' Spring's pickets ; sure ez sin,
The rebbles frosts 'll try to drive 'em in ;
For half our May 's so awfully like May n't,
'T would rile a Shaker or an evrige saint ;
Though I own up I like our back'ard springs
Thet kind o' haggle with their greens an' things,
An' when you 'most give up, without more words
Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves, an' birds :

Thet's Northun natur', slow an' apt to doubt,
But when it *doos* git stirred, ther' 's no gin-out !

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in tall trees,
An' settlin' things in windy Congresses,—
Queer politicians, though, for I'll be skinned,
Ef all on 'em don't head against the wind.
'Fore long the trees begin to show belief,—
The maple crimsons to a coral-reef,
Then saffern swarms swing off from all the willers
So plump they look like yaller caterpillars,
Then gray hossches'nuts leetle hands unfold
Softer'n a baby's be at three days old :
This is the robin's almanick ; he knows
Thet arter this ther' 's only blossom-snows ;
So, choosin' out a handy crotch an' spouse,
He goes to plast'rin' his adobe house.

Then seems to come a hitch,—things lag behind,
Till some fine mornin' Spring makes up her mind,
An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh their dams
Heaped-up with ice thet dovetails in an' jams,
A leak comes spirtin' thru some pin-hole cleft,
Grows stronger, fercer, tears out right an' left,
Then all the waters bow themselves an' come,
Suddin, in one gret slope o' shedderin' foam,
Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune

An' gives one leap from April into June :
Then all comes crowdin' in ; afore you think,
The oak-buds mist the side-hill woods with pink,
The catbird in the laylock-bush is loud,
The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy cloud,
In ellum-shrouds the flashin' hangbird clings
An' for the summer vy'ge his hammock slings,
All down the loose-walled lanes in archin' bowers
The barb'ry droops its strings o' golden flowers,
Whose shrinkin' hearts the school-gals love to try
With pins,—they'll worry yourn so, boys, bimeby !
But I don't love your cat'logue style,—do you ?—
Ez ef to sell all Natur' by vendoo ;
One word with blood in 't's twice ez good ez two :
'Nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o' the year,
Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is here ;
Half-hid in tip-top apple-blooms he swings,
Or climbs aginst the breeze with quiverin' wings,
Or, givin' way to 't in a mock despair,
Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru the air.

I ollus feel the sap start in my veins
In Spring, with curus heats an' prickly pains,
Thet drive me, when I git a chance, to walk
Off by myself to hev a privit talk
With a queer critter thet can't seem to 'gree
Along o' me like most folks,—Mister Me.

Ther' 's times when I'm unsoshle ez a stone,
An' sort o' suffocate to be alone,—
I'm crowded jes' to think thet folks are nigh,
An' can't bear nothin' closer than the sky ;
Now the wind 's full ez shifty in the mind
Ez wut it is ou'-doors, ef I ain't blind,
An' sometimes, in the fairest sou'west weather,
My innard vane pints east for weeks together,
My natur' gits all goose-flesh, an' my sins
Come drizzlin' on my conscience sharp ez pins :
Wal, et sech times I jes' slip out o' sight
An' take it out in a fair stan'-up fight
With the one cuss I can't lay on the shelf,
The crook'dest stick in all the heap,—Myself.

'T wuz so las' Sabbath arter meetin'-time :
Findin' my feelins would n't noways rhyme
With nobody's, but off the hendle flew
An' took things from an east-wind pint o' view,
I started off to lose me in the hills
Where the pines be, up back o' 'Siah's Mills :
Pines, ef you 're blue, are the best friends I know,
They mope an' sigh an' sheer your feelins so,—
They hesh the ground beneath so, tu, I swan,
You half-forgit you 've gut a body on.

Ther' 's a small school'us' there where four roads meet,
The door-steps hollered out by little feet,

An' side-posts carved with names whose owners grew
To gret men, some on 'em, an' deacons, tu ;
'T ain't used no longer, coz the town hez gut
A high-school, where they teach the Lord knows wut :
Three-story larnin' 's pop'lar now ; I guess
We thriv' ez wal on jes' two stories less,
For it strikes me ther' 's sech a thing ez sinnin'
By overloadin' children's underpinnin' :
Wal, here it wuz I larned my A B C,
An' it 's a kind o' favorite spot with me.

We 're curus critters : Now ain't jes' the minute
Thet ever fits us easy while we 're in it ;
Long ez 't wuz futur', 't would be perfect bliss,—
Soon ez it 's past, *thet* time 's wuth ten o' this ;
An' yit there ain't a man thet need be told
Thet Now 's the only bird lays eggs o' gold.
A knee-high lad, I used to plot an' plan
An' think 't wuz life's cap-sheaf to be a man ;
Now, gittin' gray, there 's nothin' I enjoy
Like dreamin' back along into a boy :
So the ole school'us' is a place I choose
Afore all others, ef I want to muse ;
I set down where I used to set, an' git
My boyhood back, an' better things with it,—
Faith, Hope, an' sunthin', ef it is n't Cherrity,
It 's want o' guile, an' thet 's ez gret a rerrity.

Now, 'fore I knowed, thet Sabbath arternoon
Thet I sot out to tramp myself in tune,
I found me in the school'us' on my seat,
Drummin' the march to No-wheres with my feet.
Thinkin' o' nothin', I 've heerd ole folks say,
Is a hard kind o' dooty in its way :
It 's thinkin' everythin' you ever knew,
Or ever hearn, to make your feelins blue.
I sot there tryin' thet on for a spell :
I thought o' the Rebellion, then o' Hell,
Which some folks tell ye now is jest a metterfor
(A the'ry, p'raps, it wun't *feel* none the better for) ;
I thought o' Reconstruction, wut we 'd win
Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agin :
I thought ef this 'ere milkin' o' the wits,
So much a month, warn't givin' Natur' fits,—
Ef folks warn't druv, findin' their own milk fail,
To work the cow thet hez an iron tail,
An' ef idees 'thout ripenin' in the pan
Would send up cream to humor ary man :
From this to thet I let my worryin' creep,
Till finally I must ha' fell asleep.

Our lives in sleep are some like streams thet glide
'Twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each side,
Where both shores' shadders kind o' mix an' mingle
In sunthin' thet ain't jes' like either single ;

An' when you cast off moorins from To-day,
An' down towards To-morrer drift away,
The imiges thet tengle on the stream
Make a new upside-down'ard world o' dream :
Sometimes they seem like sunrise-streaks an' warnins
O' wut 'll be in Heaven on Sabbath-mornins,
An', mixed right in ez ef jest out o' spite,
Sunthin' thet says your supper ain't gone right.
I 'm gret on dreams, an' often, when I wake,
I 've lived so much it makes my mem'ry ache,
An' can't skurce take a cat-nap in my cheer
'Thout hevin' em, some good, some bad, all queer.

Now I wuz settin' where I 'd ben, it seemed,
An' ain't sure yit whether I r'ally dreamed,
Nor, ef I did, how long I might ha' slep',
When I hearn some un stompin' up the step,
An' lookin' round, ef two an' two make four,
I see a Pilgrim Father in the door.
He wore a steeple-hat, tall boots, an' spurs
With rowels to 'em big ez ches'nut-burrs,
An' his gret sword behind him sloped away
Long 'z a man's speech thet dunno wut to say.—
"Ef your name 's Biglow, an' your given-name
Hosee," sez he, "it 's arter you I came ;
I 'm your gret-gran'ther multiplied by three."—
"My wut ?" sez I.—"Your gret-gret-gret," sez he :

“ You would n’t ha’ never ben here but for me.
Two hunderd an’ three year ago this May
The ship I come in sailed up Boston Bay ;
I ’d ben a cunnle in our Civil War,—
But wut on airth hev *you* gut up one for ?
I ’m told you write in public prints : ef true,
It ’s nateral you should know a thing or two.”—
“ Thet air ’s an argymunt I can’t endorse,—
’T would prove, coz you wear spurs, you kep’ a horse :
For brains,” sez I, “ wutever you may think,
Ain’t boun’ to cash the draf’s o’ pen-an’-ink,—
Though mos’ folks write ez ef they hoped jes’ quickenin’
The churn would argoo skim-milk into thickenin’ ;
But skim-milk ain’t a thing to change its view
O’ useflessness, no more ’n a smoky flue.
But du pray tell me, ’fore we further go,
How in all Natur’ did you come to know
’Bout our affairs,” sez I, “ in Kingdom-Come ? ”—
“ Wal, I worked round at sperrit-rappin’ some,
In hopes o’ larnin’ wut wuz goin’ on,”
Sez he, “ but mejums lie so like all-split
Thet I concluded it wuz best to quit.
But, come now, ef you wun’t confess to knowin’,
You ’ve some conjecturs how the thing ’s a-goin’.”—
“ Gran’ther,” sez I, “ a vane warn’t never known
Nor asked to hev a jedgment of its own ;
An’ yit, ef ’t ain’t gut rusty in the jints,

It 's safe to trust its say on certin pints :
It knows the wind's opinions to a T,
An' the wind settles wut the weather 'll be."—
" I never thought a scion of our stock
Could grow the wood to make a weathercock ;
When I wuz younger 'n you, skurce more 'n a shaver,
No airthly wind," sez he, " could make me waver !"
(Ez he said this, he clinched his jaw an' forehead,
Hitchin' his belt to bring his sword-hilt forrard.)—
" Jes' so it wuz with me," sez I, " I swow,
When I wuz younger 'n wut you see me now,—
Nothin', from Adam's fall to Huldy's bonnet,
Thet I warn't full-cocked with my jedgment on it ;
But now I 'm gittin' on in life, I find
It 's a sight harder to make up my mind,—
Nor I don't often try tu, when events
Will du it for me free of all expense.
The moral question 's ollus plain enough,—
It 's jes' the human-natur' side thet 's tough ;
Wut 's best to think may n't puzzle me nor you,—
The pinch comes in decidin' wut to *du* ;
Ef you *read* History, all runs smooth ez grease,
Coz there the men ain't nothin' more 'n ideas,—
But come to *make* it, ez we must to-day,
Th' ideas hev arms an' legs an' stop the way :
It 's easy fixin' things in facts an' figgers,—
They can't resist, nor warn't brought up with niggers ;

But come to try your the'ry on,—why, then
Your facts an' figgers change to ign'ant men
Actin' ez ugly"——“Smite 'em hip an' thigh!”
Sez gran'ther, “and let every man-child die!
Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the Lord!
O Israel, to your tents an' grind the sword!”——
“Thet kind o' thing worked wal in ole Judee,
But you forgit how long it's ben A. D.;
You think thet's ellerkence,—I call it shoddy,
A thing,” sez I, “wun't cover soul nor body;
I like the plain all-wool o' common-sense,
Thet warms ye now, an' will a twelvemonth hence.
You took to follerin' where the Prophets beckoned,
An', fust you knowed on, back come Charles the Second;
Now wut I want's to hev all *we* gain stick,
An' not to start Millennium too quick;
We hain't to punish only, but to keep,
An' the cure's gut to go a cent'ry deep.”——
“Wal, milk-an'-water ain't a good cement,”
Sez he, “an' so you 'll find it in th' event;
Ef reshness venters sunthin', shilly-shally
Loses ez often wut's ten times the vally.
Thet exe of ourn, when Charles's neck gut split,
Opened a gap thet ain't bridged over yit:
Slav'ry's your Charles, the Lord hez gin the exe,”——
“Our Charles,” sez I, “hez gut eight million necks.
The hardest question ain't the black man's right,—

The trouble is to 'mancipate the white ;
One 's chained in body an' can be sot free,—
The other 's chained in soul to an idee :
It 's a long job, but we shall worry thru it ;
Ef bag'nets fail, the spellin'-book must do it."—
"Hosee," sez he, "I think you 're goin' to fail :
The rattlesnake ain't dangerous in the tail ;
This 'ere rebellion 's nothin' but the rattle,—
You 'll stomp on thet an' think you 've won the bettle ;
It 's Slavery thet 's the fangs and thinkin' head,
An' ef you want selvation, cresh it dead,—
An' cresh it suddin, or you 'll larn by waitin'
Thet Chance wun't stop to listen to debatin' !"—
"God's truth !" sez I,—*"an' ef I held the club,*
An' knowed jes' where to strike,—but there 's the
rub !"—
"Strike soon," sez he, "or you 'll be deadly ailin',—
Folks thet 's afeared to fail are sure o' failin' ;
God hates your sneakin' creturs thet believe
He 'll settle things they run away an' leave !"
He brought his foot down fercely, ez he spoke,
An' give me sech a startle thet I woke.

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